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THE FEMALE ATHLETE, HER IMAGE IN FACT AND FICTION: A STUDY IN SOCIOLOGY THROUGH LITERATURE

by

© ANN-KAILANI JONES

A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to uncover additional information about females committed to physical activities and society's response to them. Sociological studies on women in sport are accumulating rapidly. However, as yet, these studies do not reveal much about how the sport involvement of the female athlete affects her quality of life. In an attempt to gain another perspective on the issue of females' involvement or non-involvement in athletics, fictional literature was used as a data source in this study.

Sociology of literature is the sub-discipline that uses literary works to help illuminate social understanding. This field is based on the premise that literary works express dominant social realities and, therefore, reflect a society's beliefs and values. The research methods of this discipline are the foundations of this study.

Seven bibliographies of fiction were searched to find novels featuring female athletes. Any fictional work believed to have women characters involved in sport was read. Through this process thirty-three adult female athletes and thirty-four juvenile female athletes were

located. The descriptive elements of each athletic female's characterization and society's response to her were tabulated. These summarized fictional portrayals were compared to a composite portrayal drawn from sociologically based women and sport studies. The quantitative demographic information from both sociological studies and the data from fictional sources were similar. This was especially so when comparing the summarized information from juvenile books and social research information.

These parallel fictional and factual images describe someone who is young, Caucasian, introduced to an activity through family support and who most often likes the sport for the pleasure of skill mastery. While significant, the demographic parallel of the two images was not the most vital aspect of this study. What was of critical concern, in this study, was the "negative attitude climate" toward the female athlete that was clearly reflected in the fictional literature.

In this study, certain common patterns of character treatment, for the fictional adult female athlete, emerged. For example, athletic women in novels were described as humorous, shallow persons or sexual deviates or individuals programmed for adversity. The limited character development and plot options suggested a stereotypic image that lacked the variety necessary to represent what might be found in reality. This led to

the conclusion that women in sport must overcome two barriers, an ideology (sex role subordination) and an institution (the sports' world) which are still in opposition to their activities and still maintain a constraining influence on their involvement in sports.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

There is ample historical documentation to indicate that women in all societies have engaged in strenuous physical labor. The evidence concerning the role of women in athletic activities is scanty and what information that does exist is often contradictory. Tomb paintings show Egyptian women playing ball games, hoop games, swimming, fishing, and dancing. Minoan mosaics represent women bull vaulters. Poets, artists, and story tellers of the Homeric period created diversely talented female figures. In fictional and factual accounts of the period, women drove chariots, conquered lions, trained for battle, fought when necessary, and competed in festival games. However, as far back as there is evidence of women in sport, there is also evidence that people were wondering whether or not this was a proper activity for females.

Plato states, in The Republic, "I assert without fear of contradiction that gymnastics and horsemanship are as suitable to women as to men."[1] Yet one of Xenophon's characters states that the best exercise for

a wife is making beds and kneading dough.[2] Euripides summarized another feeling in Andromache.

> No Spartan girl, could ever live clean even if she wanted. They're always out on the street in scanty outfits, making great display of naked limbs. They race and wrestle with boys too! Abominable's the word.[3]

Aristophanes has one female character poke fun of another female character, who is an athlete.

> O dearest Spartan, O Lampito, welcome.
> How beautiful you look, sweetest one.
> How fresh your complexion.
> How vigorous your body.
> You could throttle an ox.[4]

Toward the end of the Roman Empire, the female gladiator was considered the novelty of novelties. Women gladiators fought against other women or dwarfs. Nero was very fond of watching their battles.[5] Yet, it was not considered an honor for women to participate in this activity. Juvenal satirized and ridiculed these female combatants in his poems. Emperor Septimius Severus thought their activity so scandalous he, finally, banned women's participation in arena contests.[6]

Most women of the middle ages were active as laborers. The preacher, Berthold of Ratisborn, speaks of women peasants working from dawn to dusk, with barely enough received to let them eat better than pigs.[7] Noble ladies of the middle ages, also, had lives of hard physical labor. They were often left to manage large

estates when their husbands went off to war. However, their physical toil might occasionally be relieved with the recreational activities of hawking, hunting, dancing, and tournament events. One would suppose that women would only be spectators at the latter activity. Yet there is evidence from the English chronicler, Knighton of Leicester, that women might have attempted to participate in tournaments. He wrote of a band of women that came to a tournament held in 1348, as if to share the sport. He records the populace's reaction as "a huge rumour and outcry among the people," against the women attempting this.[8]

The Renaissance period reflects the same pattern. Hard physical labor was the lot of most women, with recreational activity only rarely and only for a few. The humanism that is considered characteristic of the Renaissance period affected only a small percentage of women. Because of their wealth, position and proximity to centers of academic resurgence, a few women in the courts of Northern Italy were able to benefit from increased education and, in a few cases, a broader spectrum of physical activity. Though once again, the level of exertion is clearly prescribed. In The Courtier, by Count Baldesar Castiglione, recommended activities for ladies are tennis, weapon handling, riding, hunting, and dancing. The ladies were cautioned

to be dainty in all their activities and avoid violent exercise.[9]

For most women, throughout history, exercise was a part of their life because there was so much hard work to be done. This was also true in the New World where leisure sport activities were a rare occurrence for anyone.

> In 17th and 18th century Canada, there was little in the way of organized sports and games among the settlers. The rigours of pioneer life left few hours for such events, and the physical nature of the daily work hardly called for further bodily exercise.[10]

Hard, tedious, physical labor is still a daily occurrence for many women, whether planting crops in China, harvesting grain in Africa, or building apartments in the U.S.S.R.

However, in the last decades of the nineteenth century, particularly in North America, a change began to take place. Ellen Gerber summarizes the events of this period and the twentieth century, when she says:

> Obviously there has been a decided change in the nature of women's sport participation in this country. About a hundred years ago, when sport for both men and women began to emerge as a viable cultural activity, a handful of women gently performed in a few carefully chosen, primarily recreational activities. At this time in history, thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of women, engage in a wide variety of sport, some of which is vigorous and highly competitive.[11]

In summary, it may be stated, that throughout history, most often in daily labor and occasionally in recreational sport activities, women have been physically active. Yet, there is also evidence that people have pondered whether or not this was correct and proper for females. Are people still wondering if sport is an acceptable activity for women, even though thousands of women are now participating?

One way of gaining information about what a society or a group of people believes to be important is to look at their literature. Much of what is learned about the values and interests of people in antiquity comes from studying their myths, stories, and legends. In this study, fictional sources are used as a method to obtain a more complete understanding of women in sports and their status in contemporary society. The supposition is made in this study that, fictional literature will reflect popular attitudes about female athletes.

Attitudes and feelings are difficult to assess. It is conceivable that females who are committed to physical training and sport interests are defying social mores concerning a woman's role in life. If this is so, social marginality is the ascription for the female athlete and powerful, but unspoken prevailing attitudes may still denigrate the athletic role for women, even though more and more women are becoming involved in sports. The examination of the female athlete's characterization in

popular literature is one further way of looking at societal attitudes, convictions and opinions; one further way of collecting information which may ultimately resolve the confusion and complexity which surrounds the women and sport issue.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this investigation was to uncover additional information about females committed to physical activities and society's response to them. The study summarizes information about the female athlete as it is presented in fiction. This summary involved two phases of analysis.

In the first stage of analysis, a synthesized portrayal of demographic characteristics of the female athlete in fiction was collected and compared to the demographic characteristics of the female athlete in reality, as represented by sociological studies of female athletes (see Diagram 1). This was done to assess the accuracy of the fictional portrayal of the female athlete.

In the second and most important level of analysis, an assessment of "attitude climate" toward female athletes was determined, through her characterization in novels. Fiction can better help us understand the slow and subtle changes, or lack of changes, in attitudes. Literary evidence of "attitude climate" involved noting denigrating quotes, stereotyped behavior patterns,

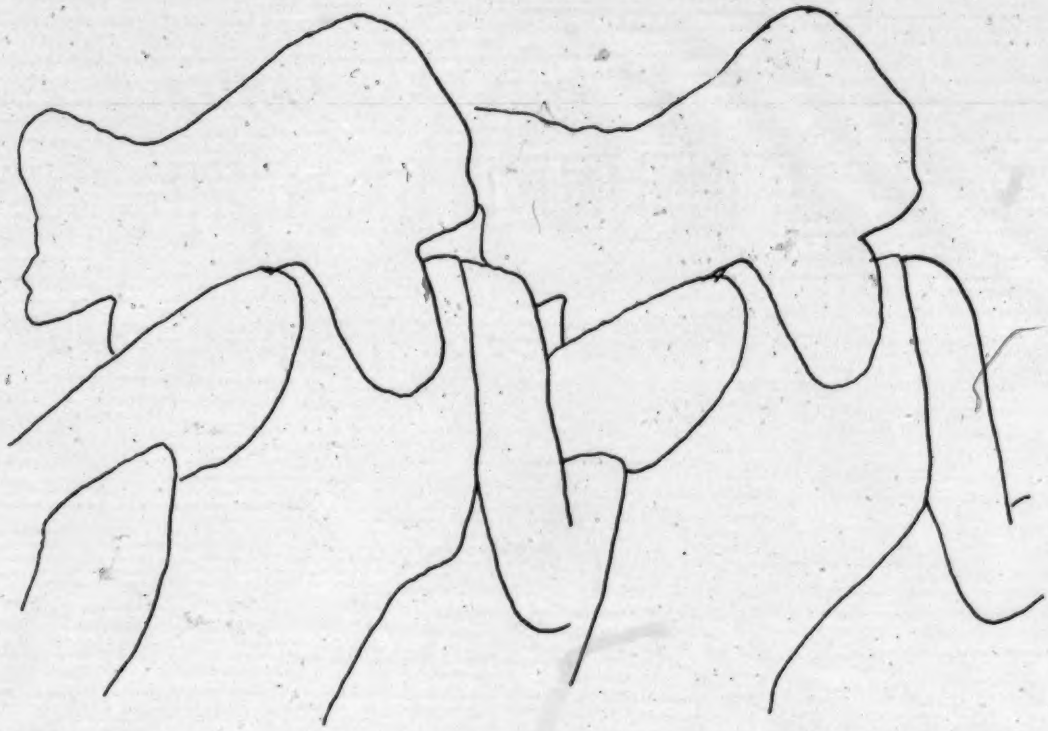

Image in Fact Image in Fiction

Are They the Same?

Diagram 1. The Female Athlete in Fact and Fiction

Source: Peter Lear, Golden Girl (London: Granada, 1978), cover.

character treatment, plot involvement and denouements ascribed to athletic females in fictional literature. When these pieces of research data fall into similar categories an assessment of authors' attitudes toward the fictional female athlete can be accomplished. It is this form of data accumulation that provided the benchmark for measuring attitudes toward female athletes.

Order of the Study

The study is ordered in the following manner. Chapter 3 is a discussion of the possibility that stereotypic patterns of active fictional women might indeed exist. Chapters 4 and 5 constitute a brief review of fiction, written prior to 1958, to see if there are patterns that represent a particular mode of treatment for female athletic characters. When it did appear that some stereotypic assignment of characteristics for fictional athletic women was operating, a systematic methodology was developed to investigate this phenomenon. These procedures are described in Chapter 6.

A primary concern of this study was the assessment of the accuracy of the fictional portrayal of the female athlete. Therefore, a standard was needed to compare the images to. For example, the fictional cowboy hero is repeatedly characterized as silent and brave, fast with a gun and good with a horse. Yet was that true in reality?

It might be the emergent patterns drawn from fiction are correct or it might be they are highly erroneous.

In this study, that necessary touchstone to reality was the data gathered from sociological research done on women in sport and research done to assess attitudes about women in sport. Chapter 7 presents this information. In Chapters 8 and 9 the fictional images are compared to published sociological data and documentation of character treatment is given. A summary and a discussion of the possible implications of the findings conclude the work.

The extent to which fiction can add to sociological knowledge is still a matter of scholarly debate. Yet, this study is based on the supposition that literature can contribute to a more complete understanding of the society. Therefore, the study begins with a discussion in support of the supposition, that literature can be a useful source for social insights.

Chapter 1 Endnotes

[1] Rachel Sargent Robinson, Sources for the History of Greek Athletes (Cincinnati, Ohio: Author, 1923), p. 125.

[2] Emily James Putnam, The Lady: Studies of Certain Significant Phases of Her History (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1910), p. 10.

[3] Vern L. Bullough, The Subordinate Sex (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1973), p. 70.

[4] James Donaldson, Woman, Her Position and Influence in Ancient Greece and Rome and Among the Early Christians (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1907), p. 30.

[5] John Pearson, Arena: The Story of the Colosseum (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1973), p. 111.

[6] Pearson, p. 111.

[7] Sibylle Harkson, Women in the Middle Ages (New York: Abner Schram, 1975), introduction.

[8] Mary R. Beard, Woman as a Force in History (New York: Macmillan Co., 1946), p. 237.

[9] Putnam, p. 194.

[10] Jean Cochrane, Abby Hoffman, and Pat Kincaid, Women in Canadian Life: Sports (Toronto: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1977), p. 15.

[11] Ellen Gerber, "The American Women's Sport Experience: An Analysis of Historical Trends," a paper presented at the Second Canadian Symposium of History of Sport and Physical Education, Windsor, Ontario, Canada, May 1-3, 1972.

Chapter 2

SOCIOLOGY THROUGH LITERATURE

> Literature, because it delineates man's anxieties, hopes, and aspirations, is perhaps one of the most effective sociological barometers of the human response to social forces.[1]

A sociological axiom states that, everything is related to everything else, but not equally relevant.[2] Most people would accept that literature and society are somehow connected; how relevant this connection is, is open to debate. This study was conducted on the premise that society and literature have a relevant relationship, and that literature provides a view of society and humanity that the social sciences cannot. This chapter presents a defense and justification for this viewpoint.

In any defense one must be aware of the opposition. The following are some of the most frequently cited arguments against the use of literature as a device for providing social insights.

Studies in sociology of literature generally start with the premise that the relationship between literature and society is most often a reflexive one. That is, what is going on in society will be reflected in literature; because literature mirrors social conditions and

responses. It is this reflexive theory that stimulates most discussion.

Noble questions this relationship at its most fundamental level. He states that the theory of literature as a reflection of social reality is inadequate for no one has shown how this interaction would work.

> . . . it is never adequately explained how the "optics" of reflection work. The image of man as the mirror of society is persuasive but enigmatic. Reflection remains an image, it does not become a concept.[3]

Others accept that written expressions do relate to the society from which the author comes, but question how true one individual's picture of society is.[4]

A human being's creativity is considered to be an inspiration and a product of individual genius and not necessarily a reflection of the nurturing forces of society.[5] This would place the creation of a work of art in the realm of a gifted few. That would mean, what one person wrote, would not necessarily tell us of the common attributes and interactions of the whole social grouping. With this perspective it would not be valid to use art as an index to society.[6] William Blake is quoted as saying, "I see only what I see and I feel only what I feel."[7] The individual's creative process may show only one person's internal struggle and say virtually nothing about society in general.

The purpose of literature also raises questions about the reliability of using literary works for social information. If a primary purpose of literature is to amuse, is it not possible that the reflection of society may be distorted? Fictitious and purposefully deceptive modes which carry a plot to its denouement may not reflect the important values and standards of a social system.[8] Literature can also stimulate, provoke, entertain, educate and enlighten us. A novel can simply reflect the author's wish to please a publishing house or to make money or to provide personal escape, none of which necessarily mirror vital and integral functions of society.[9]

Other major objections to the use of contemporary literature as a medium for analyzing society relate to the quantity of material available and the selection process used to decide which books will be included in a study. The sociologist studying literature is not a literary critic, deciding what single work or writer has the greatest value. Forester and Kenneford have labeled studies of this type "literary sociology" and they feel these studies lead to what they have further labeled "evaluative fallacies."[10] When only great works are studied, social ideas and interactions may be limited and present a barrier to sociological understanding.

In summary, social data from literature is suspect because no one can illustrate just how literary works are

tied to society, no one can show how truthful and precise an individual writer's perceptions of society are, and no one can discern the degree of distortion in writing for various literary purposes. Finally, it is argued that a complete picture of society would require too vast a sampling of authors from too many levels of literature: the great, the popular, and the poor.

These are the summarized points of opposition. The defense and justification of a relevant and real connection between society and literature has many adherents, with many different opinions as to how the relationship and connection works. Though not totally explicable, as pointed out by the preceding argument, the logic that man's creations must somehow be related to his world can not be scrapped.

For as long as human beings have produced literary works, others have attempted to evaluate these literary products and explain their influence. These inquiries have been going on for over two thousand years. They make perennial appearances in literary criticism. Does literature merely reflect society or do society and literature interact, shape and re-define each other? Proponents of each have set forth their views throughout history.

In his play Frogs, Aristophanes has Aeschylus inquire as to the real function and power of the poet. In the Republic, Plato examined the type of influence a

poet might have on the state and concluded that a poet's passionate power might not be entirely good. Aristotle felt literature was the art of imitation and representation of life.[11]

In Renaissance criticism, Sir Philip Sidney defended poetry as a necessary model by which the poet offers better ideas for the real world to emulate.[12] John Dryden referred to literary works as "a just and lively image of human nature, representing its passions and humours . . . ."[13]

Modern critics still ponder and debate these issues. Wordsworth evaluated literary works, particularly poetry, as another view of life. He gave value to those works that could direct and shape men's emotions. Matthew Arnold gives even greater weight to a society's literary productions. He entrusted, to poetry, the interpretation of life and the setting of high standards.[14] Shelley, in his A Defense of Poetry, argues that the written message is essential for fresh and new ways of thinking. When language is used its symbolic representations become less and less specific. With a poet's new associations, people are forced to re-look at the meaning of words. Shelley claims that without the poet language would be dead.[15] T. S. Eliot sees poetry and literature as a continuous, stabilizing force that unites the past and the present in a structural whole.[16]

Historically poetry has been a major literary form. In modern times the novel has eclipsed the popularity of poetry. The universal fascination with literature and its influence on society still continues, though, now more critics are attempting to analyze the effect and impact novels have on society. These investigations will continue for as long as the debate on the nature of man is alive. For what man creates is, of course, an extension of the philosophical question concerning the nature of man.

Is man an object caught and directed by a set web of his experiences or does he have a part in the building of the web and the structuring of its design and therefore his own destiny? It would appear that, throughout history, far more individuals have accepted that literature and society must be interrelated. Though how this interrelationship works is still not resolved.

Students of literature have attempted to understand literary works by contemplating and investigating their impact on society. The investigators of society have begun, in the last two hundred years, to ask themselves some of the very same questions literary critics have been asking for two thousand years. Many sociologists using literature as another source of information about society, have taken the stand that the relationship between society and literature is a direct and obvious one. They argue, the connection is so clear and

fundamental, literature is what it is, because of society. Society and its conventions, ethical standards, religious and philosophical beliefs, economic organizations and political structures provide the outline for literary production.[17] An author is never truly free from society's influences. From this perspective literature is seen as a replication of a society and a synthesis of the major elements of the times.[18]

This idea can best be illustrated by comparing literature and society to a drawing placed on an overhead transparency. Whatever shape is thrown up on the screen is then filled out by another transparency laid on top of the first. Society and all its components represent the first transparency. Literature represents the overlay. The shape of the latter should follow the shape of the former. Books do not evolve by themselves, though a few books might be considered as the product of a divine revelation, such as the Bible. Books are products of human beings, people who are what they are because of social causes and social effects. The author is embroiled and entangled in social structures, as one atom of the molecules that make up society.

The history of this view of society and literature might be said to have begun with Madame de Stael's <u>De la litterature consideree dans ses rapports avec los institutions sociales</u> published in 1800.[19] Madame de Stael argued that literature conforms to social

structures. She set out to document that under different forms of government, literature would vary. Fifty years later Hippolyte Taine published his History of English Literature. Taine believed that all English literature could be explained by three forces: the race, the environment, and the time.[20] He felt man created in accordance with his genetic makeup, the nurturing forces surrounding him, and events and happenings into which he was precipitated. Karl Marx was also an early student of society and its literature. Marx felt that literary works were the direct result of social influences. He felt that art and literature were expressions of attitudes and values coming from the ruling class. The social scientists Comte, Spencer, Sorokin and Veblen all believed that the essence of a culture would be reflected in a society's literature.[21] Witte uses a clever analogy, which he attributes to Taine, to explain this theoretical relationship. Literature can be seen as material within a certain geological stratum, the kind of rock it turns out to be will depend on the forces acting upon it.[22]

Even if an author has no desire to develop and express significant social experiences, even if an author sets out only to write a book that will sell or promote a cause, their choices are still a reflection of their society. As the atom analogy suggests, an author's creation is limited by where and how he is situated. The

social components of a writer dictate his creative response. No one is completely free to select from an infinite number of choices, for our socialization screens and sifts out most of them.

To reiterate, if one believes that society and literature do have a direct relationship, that association can be viewed as being controlled by society. Whatever society is, so literature will be. More specifically, whatever society is, man will be and so then man's literary works will be a product directed by social standards and events. The foregoing argument prevails among many sociology of literature scholars; however, other interpretations are possible. For example, if the analogy of the transparency overlay is used again, some perceive that literature is the first transparency and that it has the power to shape the outline of society and individuals' actions and responses.

Uncle Tom's Cabin is frequently referred to as one factor that contributed to the eruption of the American Civil War. Abraham Lincoln is reported to have referred to Harriet Beecher Stowe as the woman who started the war. Upton Sinclair's book, The Jungle, is put forth as a major determinant for the development and enforcement of the Pure Food and Drug laws. Mayes suggests that what becomes defined as reality in the characters, plot and setting of a book will have the force of reality.[23]

This theory classifies literature as an institution. An institution can be defined as a distinctive complex of social actions and procedures through which human conduct is patterned.[24] In this context, literature can function as an instrument for shaping society and people's actions. Social institutions serve to help us function in society, to know what are the expected choices, when a decision needs to be made and what choice society considers most favorable. Institutions function to help channel our decisions.

Berger illustrates this well in his book, Invitation to Sociology, A Humanistic Perspective. In our society, when a man falls in love, the most common resulting decision has been to marry. The custom of marriage is an institution in North American society. It does not mean it is the only choice. The man could have sexual relations with the woman he loves and then leave, he could incorporate her in his harem, he could ask male friends of his if they would jointly like to acquire the woman, these are all acceptable options in other societies. They are not frequent choices in Western society. Institutions help to pattern actions and direct choices.[25]

Language and its use provide common symbols for expressing our thoughts and experiences. A common language, written or spoken, develops common thought patterns and common ideologies.[26] What we call things and how we write about things will determine how we act

toward them.[27] Duncan states, "For as we name, we love and hate and finally we live and die in roles named 'good' and 'evil' by society."[28] As a human is socialized certain ways of thinking and ways of acting aré presented. "Literature provides a conscious exploration through imagination of the possibilities of human action in society."[29] The reader can learn role variations, how to act in certain roles, and what society thinks of particular roles.

In this light, it does seem that literature can function as a social institution, helping to shape the individuals that make up a society. In repeatedly offering certain types of heroes and heroines and certain action consequences, lessons about life are offered. The tortoise did win the race; is slow and steady best? "Good" girls almost always get their man; is virtue the better option? Literature can pattern our actions and shape our expectations. Humans are an integral part of the swirling social forces surrounding them, of which literature is a part. They can accept, adapt, rebel, but not escape. Literature is an integral part of this larger whole, and is one of society's directing forces.

The valence structure of an atom sets the characteristics of a molecule, which creates elements. But also the chemical and physical manipulations of elements can in turn affect the internal structure of atoms. The most logical explanation concerning the relationship

between society and literature would appear to be one of interaction. It seems realistic to assume a society and its literature have a dialectic relationship, that they interact to affect and influence each other. It is this logical compromise of theoretical explanations that offers a whole new area for social information.

Mayes states that literature can help us understand the macroscopic structures of society, those institutions basic to social organization. Further, the study of literature can help us understand microscopic structures of society, those individual forces that motivate or constrain an author. More important the real gift that literature can give is a view of that delicate interaction between macroscopic structures and microscopic structures, which is of paramount importance in the attempts to understand social operations.

> Each piece of literature is a comment on society filtered through the experience of one individual. It is in this dimension that the dialectical relationship between microscopic and macroscopic dimensions of social analysis comes together in literature. Through the content of literature one sees the interaction between internal images and external constraints.[30]

And that is clearly what this study purports. By investigating contemporary novels and the characterizations assigned to female athletes, one should be provided with another source of information as to how individuals

(authors) are reacting to changes in social institutions (the entry of females to the sports world).

Some basic orientations to the relationship between literature and society have been discussed. Albrecht has summarized these ideas and has developed three divisions and labels for these approaches. Though simplistic, his analysis is helpful for it provides "handles" for discussion. Albrecht has stated that literature can reflect society, literature can shape society, or literature can stabilize society.[31]

The reflection theory is the hypothetical grounding for most sociology of literature studies. The manners, morals, norms, values, and tastes of a society are believed to be mirrored in the literature of that period. This view is so often accepted that it is used to make inferences without justification or even awareness of the assumed association. Fictional tales, myths, and epic poems are often used as sources for anthropological evidence.

The shaping theory states that literature has the power to influence society. Literary works can act as models, suggesting new values, new norms, new ways of acting and behaving.

Albrecht's third division is that "literature functions socially to maintain and stabilize, if not to justify and sanctify, the social order . . . ."[32] Here,

literature functions to confirm values and contribute to social solidarity.

The stabilization theory and the shaping theory can be seen as antithetical components of one theory. If we accept the shaping theory, that literature has the power to influence society, we would then have to accept that literary works could influence society towards traditional values (that probably being what ideas were currently accepted; for example, women should be mothers and homemakers first) or literary works could influence society toward new values (that probably being what ideas were not currently acceptable; for example, women should have the freedom to choose from any number of possible roles). Traditional shaping forces of literature would then be just another label for the stabilizing theory. Whichever way they are interpreted, both theories are of interest to this study.

Should an author decide to offer only a limited number of options to fantasize about, or to put into operation, the reader may begin to feel that only a few role variations are socially acceptable. This is most pertinent to the portrayal of the fictional female and offers a possible hypothesis to explain why her characterization in modern popular literature is stereotyped.

Many studies have documented the limited development of women in literature. Content analysis of primary school textbooks shows that most stories are centered

around boys. It is the male in the story who uses creativity and ingenuity; females rarely solve their own problems nor do they participate in active physical outdoor experiences.[33] Adult characters depicted in children's stories, also, have unequal exposure; 75 percent of adult characters in textbooks for children are male, few females are employed outside the home and most females take supporting roles to males.[34] It seems clear that a great majority of literature for children reflects less active roles for females.

The standards reflected in juvenile fiction are mirrored in adult short stories. There is a total inequality in the representation of women characters, female problems and concerns, and few independent women heroines.[35] Periodicals consistently include stories by and about women, yet these fictional females do not adequately capture the feminine experience, nor do they appear with the variety of roles ascribed to women in real life. Most often women in magazine stories serve as "plot props" for the resolution of masculine dilemmas. Fictional females in periodical literature of the forties, fifties, sixties, and seventies are frequently passive, unaggressive creatures.[36]

The female of the adult novel is, as in periodical literature and stories for children, a simple creature. The complexity that characterizes most human beings is absent, she is denied emotional, moral, and intellectual

development. Most often the greatest stress is on her sexuality and her ability to produce the desired effect on males.[37] Men may love her, but she never seems able to love herself.[38] The stereotyped female, as an object to be used by men, continues strongly in the literature of the sixties and seventies. The fictional lady of modern times explodes into a fantastic world of sexual activity with little love, limited intelligence, and no humor.[39] The evidence overwhelmingly shows that literature does not provide equal representation of men and women. Most fictional females direct all their energy to snaring a man and once married, are fictionally finished.[40]

The review of studies concerned with the portrayal of women in fiction indicates a very limited spectrum of characterization, yet statistical data assure us that women have a much greater variety in their role aspirations, jobs and activities. If the reflection theory is not operating, that is, reality is not being mirrored, does this mean that literature, in its treatment of women, is attempting to prescribe only certain roles? Regardless of the realities of our current society, where a great percentage of women work, support households and raise families by themselves, the fictional female is treated neither kindly nor realistically. The adult female athlete in fictional works does not receive appreciably better treatment.

When one looks at the number and variety of athletic male characters and characterizations, the lack of fictional female athletes and their limited characterizations become even more astounding. Fictional athletic males involved in sport seem to be almost limitless in number, with character development and action options that appear infinite.

Male sport activities have always been a theme of literature. The earliest American dime novels and weeklies carried sports fiction. The list of American male sports heroes is long and varied, with both comic and serious portraits.[41] Jack London, Frank Norris, and Sherwood Anderson repeatedly used sports heroes in their short stories. Sinclair Lewis laughed at the businessman athlete but then also wrote of the charismatic force of the ex-football player Elmer Gantry. Ernest Hemingway develops Robert Cohn, a boxer, and Pedro Romero, a bull fighter, in The Sun Also Rises. One is shy, insecure and weak, the other is noble and dignified. Fitzgerald created Basil Duke Lee, Amory Blaine, Nick Carroway, and Tom Buchanan. The characterizations developed here range from college hero and romantic warrior to physical brute and moral weakling.[42] There is representation of the middle age athlete in Brick Pollit from Tennessee Williams' Cat on a Hot Tin Roof and the young, developing athlete is represented in the character of Biff, in Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman. William Faulkner

created Labove, a football player in The Hamlet. "One of Thomas Wolfe's most memorable characters is Nebraska Crane, the baseball player in You Can't Go Home Again."[43] Jones' hero in From Here to Eternity was a boxer. John Steinbeck's Victor in Burning Bright was an ex-athlete.[44]

Male athletic heroes are featured in a variety of roles in Marquand's H. M. Pulham, Esq., Robert Penn Warren's All the Kings Men, Roth's The Great American Novel, Harris' The Southpaw, Malamud's The Natural, Don Delilio's End Zone, Gent's North Dallas Forty, Updike's Rabbit, Run, and the list could go on.

Athletes or ex-athletes are featured characters in many plays. Some of the better known ones have been mentioned. Others are Hal Carter of Picnic, Turk of Come Back, Little Sheba, Gordon Shaw of Strange Interlude. Sport and male athletes are the central theme of three plays from the seventies: Sackler's The Great White Hope, Miller's Champion Season, and Reynolds' Yanks 5, Detroit 0, Top of the Seventh.[45]

Even in this very brief review some major American writers are apparent. The power of the male athletic hero in literature is summarized by Messenger. "In America no present fictional subject can claim as much representative power."[46]

But the female athletic heroine is rarely and poorly represented, though it is apparent that she is appearing, in reality, in increasing numbers. What

interrelationship is occurring here, between the novel and the society the novel supposedly describes?

Theories concerning the relationship between literature and society suggest that literary works can reflect society, stabilize society, or shape society. It is difficult with popular literature, from contemporary times, to judge the stabilizing or shaping influences books may have. For without an extended period to observe, monitor and measure reactions, responses, and changes, literature's impact is obscured. However, it is possible to critically appraise the reflective power of literature. By using sociological data as "summarized reality" an attempt, in this study, is made to measure the accuracy of the image of the female athlete in fiction. Sociological data has its limitations, but it is the best condensed evaluation available as to what the female athlete is like and what society thinks about her. What is happening, if it is discovered that the fictional and factual images are not similar?

Recent studies indicate that literature, especially that for mass consumption, does mirror a society's most commonly accepted attitudes. Eighteen sociological studies have been reviewed (see Appendix A: Current Studies in the Sociology of Literature). These studies use literary works to evaluate social institutions. Sixteen concluded that literature, especially periodical literature, mirrored currently held attitudes. Current

attitudes about war, divorce, minority groups, the role of women, economic values, and the correct number of children to have, were all reflected in the prose of the time. Popular literature reflected popular beliefs.

The implications of this synopsis are important to this study. If the discovered images portrayed in fiction are different from what is known about the female athlete in reality, is the fictional image of the female athlete what people really feel about the modern woman in sport?

> For each of us, the centre of the Universe is behind our eyes and it is from inside our skulls that we watch the world. Art provides an opportunity of seeing over someone else's shoulder and reading means looking into someone else's sensibility.[47]

Chapter 2 Endnotes

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Chapter 3

EMERGENT PATTERNS

In the preceding chapter it was argued that literature can provide additional insight into how people view society. It was also suggested that popular literature can be an index to popular beliefs. Further, it was suggested that authors' perceptions are reflected in their character compositions and that it is plausible that a recurrent pattern of characteristics might represent an orientation of attitudes toward women in sport.

Before embarking on a rigorous, extensive, and controlled investigation some evidence of the validity of these speculative arguments was necessary. The idea for this study came from a re-evaluation of the random fictional reading done by the author in the last three years. This was not done as a disciplined study with controlled sampling procedures, but merely served as a pre-test exercise to indicate the viability of a more detailed investigation. The objective was simply to review recreational reading selections for an indication of the kind of character treatment assigned to female athletes in novels.

Contemporary, popular novels do portray physically active females. In fact, young fictional females seemed drawn to sport and athletics. Yet novels record negative experiences associated with this interest. Four examples of fictional females' early experiences in athletic and sport endeavors follow. The protagonist in Alix Kates Shulman's book, Memoirs of an Ex-Prom Queen, narrates the following:

> And like my cards, I too was adaptable. Though in my summers and on my street I had wandered freely, taking to the woods and the very tips of the trees, in my first weeks of first grade I learned to stay uncomplainingly in my place on the steps or in the shadow of the school. I learned masculine and feminine.
>
> "Go on to the mountain, girls, it's a gorgeous day," Mrs. Hess would urge as we stood on the steps at recess trading cards. Or, "Why don't you play some freeze tag? You need the exercise." But we knew better. We knew that going near the ball fields or behind the backstop or near the basket hoop or in among the fruit trees or around the mountain or near the skating pond were extremely dangerous expeditions, even if we went in a pack--for that was all boys' territory, acknowledged by everyone.[1]

Another example is recorded in Kinflicks, by Lisa Alther.

> There was a time, when I was thirteen, when I wanted nothing but to be a defensive left tackle for the Oakland Raiders. That was before I learned the bitter lesson that women led their lives through men. . . . My tackles were performed with the fervor of a soldier making love on the eve of a lost battle. My blocks were positioned with the loving precision lavished on daily routines by terminal cancer patients. Something in me knew that I would never be an Oakland Raider. . . . I would

> have to pull myself up by my training bra straps into some strange new arena of combat. . . . That point turned out to be the messy morning of my first menstrual period.
>
> Blushing and stammering, averting her eyes, . . . Mother assured me that what was happening was indeed horrible--but quite normal. . . .
>
> "No more football," she added offhandedly. "You're a young woman now." I knew at that moment what Beethoven must have felt when informed that his ears would never hear music again. No more football? She might just as well have told Arthur Murray never to dance again.[2]

Freia talks about her unhappy experience in her Physical Education class, in the book, The Rennläufer.

> Perhaps the most painful moments of my life took place during gym. We used to play softball. At the beginning of each week the teacher would select two girls to be the captains, leaving it up to them to choose their teams from the rest of the class. The selections were made with great speed and enthusiasm right up until the end when three little girls remained. One was a little Negro girl, another had a terrible birthmark on her face and was slightly spastic, and the third girl was I. Can you imagine the shame we three suffered hearing the captains argue about our fate? Usually it was decided that one captain would take the Negro girl and the other would take the spastic and me. Needless to say, Freia laughed lightly, we were assigned positions so far out in the field that we sometimes feared arrest by the truant officer.[3]

Another young fictional female has these reflections about her gym class, in Patricia Dizenzo's An American Girl.

> Monday I was late for lineup in gym and had to see Miss Milhaus after school. My locker got stuck and I had to do the combination about ten times before it opened. She gave me a dirty

> look when I came in her office, keeping me waiting about 20 minutes while she went out to the gym, yelling around as they put up the nets for the volleyball teams. . . . Finally she came back and asked what happened. I said my lock must be rusty inside as it was always jamming. She said when she blew the whistle she wanted the girls in their squads, at attention, with pressed gymsuits and clean sneakers, and no excuses.[4]

In these few novels it appeared that young fictional females' induction into the sport world was not always joyous. I then wished to review what I could recall, in past recreational reading, of the treatment of adult, fictional, female athletes. A number of different portrayals came to mind.

In fiction, women are portrayed as spectators of sport. In the book, The Narrows, by Kenneth H. Brown, this pattern is illustrated. In one scene the boys take elaborate pains to mark a field, choose teams, and play ball. The girls? "The girls sat in the shade of Howie's tree and talked. They watched the game occasionally with casual interest."[5]

Women are, also, portrayed in ancillary roles where their actions can add color and excitement to men's games. In the novel, Walk Down Main Street, this is the function of two female characters.

> Sally and Josephine were very busy girls. In addition to their office job and their school work, they were cheerleaders, belonging to the squad which went everywhere with the ball team. . . . It was a foregone conclusion that the prettiest, peppiest girls would always be

> chosen. You had to be good to make a showing against other schools, who also chose the prettiest and peppiest.[6]

More often, though, examples could be produced where there was a negative portrayal of the adult fictional female. For example, active, fictional, female athletes were characterized in some novels, as temptresses to distract men, as unthinking persons, as sexually abnormal or set up as the butt of jokes. Even in simply winning a ping-pong game, a successful and skilled woman is suspect.

> He felt sorry for her, but she was a tough cookie, all right, she could take care of herself. Why did she so much want to do him in at ping-pong? Because he was male, obviously.[7]

The athletic female in fiction also has her intellect questioned. Consider these descriptions from Miss Pym Disposes, by Josephine Tey:

> Miss Wragg, on the other hand, the Junior Gymnast--big, bouncing, young, and pink--had apparently no ideas at all. . . .[8]

> Young Miss Wragg, busy pouring out coffee, was the world of sport; a physical competitive, unthinking world.[9]

If not dumb, the female athlete in fiction is often pictured as a sexually driven creature. One example of the sexual innuendos is the fictional national champion baton twirler, young and virginal, tossing on her bed, as she tries various ways of stimulating herself.

> Sharon DuBois applied Mentholatum to that special place, and writhed upon her bed. She could see herself quite well in the mirrored door of her bedroom; she had pulled the bed out slightly from its normal position by the wall so that she could see.[10]

The experimenting young girl is a character from the book Fancy Strut. Her portrayal is characterized by unbridled sexual interests.

If heterosexual experiences are not the interest of the woman in sport then homosexual desires can be attributed to her.

> Cynthia taught physical education for girls, and Mildred taught arts and crafts. The thought had occurred to Evelyn numerous times that the two women were possibly lovers. . . . Once in a while, one of the teachers would make some unguarded remark such as, "Isn't it wonderful how well Cynthia and Mildred get along together? Really, they seem as happy as newlyweds."[11]

The female athlete in fiction is also portrayed as the butt of jokes or comical descriptive passages. The following is an example of this type of characterization.

> Daisy had once, for a short while, been a member of the women's section of the Harlics [a community track club]. Partly by analogy with Rusty Miller, but more on account of her exceptional physique, she had been nicknamed Busty. Her membership was brief because she found that sprinting a hundred yards caused her both discomfort and embarrassment. Someone remarked it was surprising she didn't give herself a black eye with her own bosom.[12]

One need only glance at the women gathered for an international sporting competition or an Olympic event to recognize the female athlete is generally beautiful in physical stature and activity patterns. Far from being abnormal in any way, she most often brings pleasure to the spectator with the aesthetics of her movement. When one thinks of the female athlete in reality and then recalls even these few images, it would appear that an unbalanced character treatment is occurring. Though this chapter represents only examples from random, recreational reading, there does appear to be enough unusual descriptive information to suggest that reality is not being mirrored. These examples suggest that a more systematic study of contemporary fiction would be a valuable exercise in attempting to learn more about women's involvement in sport and society's reaction to them. For if we know that reality is not being mirrored in these fictional characters, is the theory of literary sociologists being demonstrated? That is, do these writings reflect the contemporary attitude toward females in sport? Do individual authors really believe the sports woman is dumb, sexually abnormal, and humorous? If so, then certainly a more comprehensive investigation would be worthwhile. For if these emergent patterns, which reflect a rather negative feeling, are repeatedly found in a number of novels, the collective impression may be that our traditional role assignments and role

models for women still have not expanded enough to include sport involvement as acceptable behavior.

The examples in this chapter are representative of contemporary fiction. Modern fiction tends to deal more and more with anti-heroes, self-depreciation, violence, and sex. Therefore, one more preliminary step was needed before committing to a full study. There needed to be some check as to whether these discussed examples were emergent patterns reflecting a stereotypic treatment of fictional female athletes or merely an extension of a current literary trend describing the more negative attributes of life. To provide this check a brief historic review of fiction with female athletes was made. It was felt that if authors, outside contemporary time spans, were discovered to create female athletic character compositions in stereotypic patterns, then this orientation might also be representative of certain societal attitudes. Chapters 4 and 5 present this historical review.

Chapter 3 Endnotes

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Chapter 4

A HISTORICAL REVIEW OF ATHLETIC, JUVENILE FEMALES IN FICTIONAL LITERATURE PRIOR TO 1958

In the early and middle 1900's major fictional female characters were depicted as very active girls. Young females in this period were exceptionally vigorous, but their interest and devotion to athletics and sport had clearly established boundaries. The girls could walk, hike, run, ride horses, play tennis or dance, until adulthood when activity, exercise, and play took a subordinate position to the goal of attracting a mate.

The characterizations of minor fictional females serve as a warning of possible retributive punishments, should a girl think of too ardent a devotion to sport. These sports-addicted minor characters are frequently described as big, ugly, and unpopular. An important message seems to be that a female's ultimate direction should not be toward sport. In other words, no stigma is associated with physical activity as long as a moderation of activity with age occurs.

Janet Aldridge's creations, the Meadow-Brook Girls, provide an example of female characters who are very active and vigorous in their girlhood. This series was

begun in the early 1900's and follows the activities of a group of American Pathfinders. In the story, The Meadow-Brook Girls Cross Country, the female heroines are young wonder women. Leaving the main camp, Wau-Wau, the girls decide to hike and camp till they reach Meadowbrook, their home. One girl, Harriet, is the super-heroine. In this trek she saves her friends and Miss Elting (their guardian) from a barn fire, marauding gypsies, a provoked bear, quicksand, threatening tramps and three raging bulls. Throughout all these trials Harriet still finds time to lead her group so that they out-hike and finally beat the boys' club in a contest of endurance. She is, as Miss Elting says, ". . . the most remarkable girl I've ever known, or ever, shall know."[1] Positive evaluation of all the girls is provided by the leader of the boys, Captain Baker. He summarizes his opinion of the girls' character in these statements: "They aren't the helpless, fainting kind. Those girls know how to take care of themselves."[2] Clearly, physical activity for girls is accepted, encouraged and admired in this story.

The Jane Allen series is another example where robust physical activity for young girls is a common pattern. Jane Allen is a girl from Montana who attends an eastern college where there are ample opportunities for girls to experience adventure and physical activity, including successes on the girls' basketball team.

Despite the fact that Jane Allen was not typical of most girls in that period, the book contains other stereotyped characters. The speech and actions of the "Jap" cook, the untidy and smelly "Mexican types" seem too conventional.

In the story, Jane Allen: Center, the whole girls' school focuses on basketball.

> Basketball fever had set in with epidemic proportions. Every minute in the day available or capable of being snatched, was occupied with the little bluebook guaranteed to give all the rules, all the official information, and all the game of girls' basketball, visionary and actual. . . .[3]

Jane's highest moment, literally and figuratively, comes after making the winning free throw shot, during the big game (Figure 1).

In the 1930's, the active, energetic, fictional female was epitomized by Nancy Drew. Physical skills, strength, and endurance were developed as essential and important aspects of Nancy's success. "Nancy brilliantly played tennis and golf, and rode like a cowboy. Nancy danced like Ginger Rogers. . . ."[4] Author and critic James P. Jones has said, for little girls, Nancy was someone to emulate.[5] If this is so, she would have been a very athletic model.

The characters, Nancy Drew, Jane Allen, and the Meadow-Brook girls, are all products of formula novels, where the plots and actions are predictable, especially

Figure 1. Jane Allen

Source: Edith Bancroft, Jane Allen: Center (New York: Cupples and Leon, 1920), p. 216.

if one has read more than one book in these serials. The girls' physical strengths are given, magically, without hard work or training. With the publication of National Velvet by Enid Bagnold in 1935, these prescriptions are surpassed and a deviation in the mold occurs.[6]

Velvet is not the perfect, lovely heroine. She and her family are believable, each character having negative and positive attributes. Velvet has short, pale hair, large protruding teeth, and a passion for horses that gives her family reason to think she is daft. Physically an unheroic heroine, her fight to ride her horse in the Nationals and her win become even more valorous in contrast. Unlike Harriet, Nancy, or Jane, Velvet works hard to master her equestrian skills. The story is a much more realistic picture of the work it takes to be an athlete.

Other than horse riding, tennis is the activity most often found in girls' stories of the late forties and early fifties. Young female tennis players are repeatedly presented by the author and tennis champion, Helen Hull Jacobs. Laurel for Judy is one such book. It tells the story of female tennis champion, Judy Martin. Judy is characterized as a disciplined, hard-working athlete, but various comments suggest that her interests are divided.

> But I've got to fix my hair and nails and everything. And I'll be hot after playing and you know how long it takes to cool off.[7]
>
> Emerald green was her best color, she decided, and the chiffon a welcome relief from the severity of tennis clothes.[8]

Jacobs' females are super-athletes, but greater emphasis is placed on the girls' self-development and the learning of social graces. Success in attracting males is particularly stressed. In Laurel for Judy, the heroine has spent five afternoons a week, for many months practicing and has won the National Junior Championship; however, the reader is reassured that Judy can still attract a male. The last chapter ends with her meeting and catching the attention of Tim Stafford. When Judy attends her celebration party, her mother's summary comment is, "She may be Junior Champion but she's still Judy."[9]

The pattern of romantic emphasis and personal-social conflict is followed again in Center Court. Published in 1950, it is the story of Kathy Webb, United States Tennis Champion, who goes on to win at Wimbledon. In the last sentence, Jacobs reminds the readers of the more important event in Kathy's life, her coming marriage:

> She wanted to remember every detail of the Center Court on this day that had justified so much effort and the faith of so many people before she went on to the only days of her life that could surpass this one.[10]

Mate selection and marriage figure most prominently in Proudly She Serves. The subtitle summarizes the plot: the realistic story of a tennis champion who becomes a WAVE. Once again, the major concern is with which man should receive all the heroine's attention.[11]

Young females may be athletes, as long as their priorities are correctly ordered. Social acceptance is first and the ability to attract the opposite sex is essential. Amelia Elizabeth Walden is another author who follows this prescription. Victory for Jill, Three Loves Has Sandy, and My Sister Mike all have outstanding female athletes whose most pressing concern is settling their relationships with males.

Mike has such amazing basketball control she can "hook" (a Walden term, for this shot) the ball into the basket from center court. The main character's skill in Three Loves Has Sandy is also phenomenal.

> Sandy was a good pitcher and she knew it. She worked hard at it. She had a lot of natural stuff in her favor--a first rate arm, a good eye, a way with a ball, imperturbable poise on the pitcher's plate [a Walden term], not a nerve in her body, the stamina of an ox.[12]

Like the other heroines, no matter how great an athlete she is, her attention and interest ultimately lay elsewhere. Sandy had three loves: softball, horses, and Bill. With the first two she voluntarily struck out. The female athlete in Victory for Jill also conforms to

this pattern. She is the most outstanding player on her school's field hockey team but her primary concern is which boyfriend she should choose.[13]

The choice of a male is also the major concern of girls devoted to dance. In Lee Wyndham's Golden Slippers[14] and Catherine Blanton's Hold Fast to Your Dreams[15] the female protagonists order their whole lives around dance practices, skill improvement, and the landing of major dance roles. However, the concurrently developing romantic attachments receive the spotlight.

A historical review of juvenile literature for girls clearly shows active, young females. The major characters are attractive, physically skilled, exhibiting endurance and strength, and are popular with their peers. Though talented, with athletic skills far above average, their sport or activity is moderated by social expectations. Relationships with males come first. However, it is the minor characters who are portrayed in a different perspective. Their depiction offers a warning signal to those who might take sport activity as their primary passion.

The warning is articulated well by Gordon in Laurel for Judy:

> Girl athletes are all right as long as they still look like girls. I've seen some of them. They look as if they could dig a ditch faster than I could. They get full of muscle and their clothes are pretty awful. You wouldn't

> mind having them with you in a good fight, but you'd hate to take them to a party.[16]

The message is: girls, beware of serious devotion to sports, athletics, or physical activity; it will make you unattractive. And so it does! Consider these descriptions: A woman who loved to play baseball,

> One of the girls who worked on those was a baseball player. . . . How that gal could pitch! She had muscles like a forgeman. . . . We called her "Spitball."[17]

A girl who was the best hockey player in the league,

> Jill scanned the field of players for the big, rawboned girl with reddish hair. There she was, with her side-legged stance and her arms akimbo. Her face was red in the biting wind and her red hair flew out behind her, unmanageable even with a broad green band holding it down. She seemed too big for her uniform. She was the kind of girl who would go through life seeming too large for her clothes.[18]

And this warning,

> Girls weren't geared to this high-pressure athletic competition. The normal girl, no matter how good an athlete she was, just couldn't play a man's game.[19]

George Orwell has written about the power of novels, serial stories, films, and other forms of popular culture, as important factors in influencing the imagination of people. He argues that even those who consider themselves educated, sophisticated, or advanced

actually carry with them an imaginative background inherited from childhood readings and film watching.[20]

Orwell's idea is provocative, especially when one applies his theory in the area of fictional stories for young girls. The fictional female athlete as a role model offers a narrow range for the imagination to play with. The prescription offered is: activity for a female when young, but not too much of it, for too long.

These thoughts deserve consideration. A study by McArthur and Eisen suggests that sex differences in achievement-motivated behavior in our society may derive in part from sex differences in achievement imagery in the books to which boys and girls are exposed.[21] It seems like a long leap from fictional characters to aspects of personal achievement, but perhaps not so far-fetched when one remembers the federal courts in the United States are trying to judge the effects of television characters on adolescent criminal behavior. Mayes' comment, summarized in Chapter 2, should again be considered. That is, what is described as a truth may be treated as truth and have the consequences of reality.

Chapter 4 Endnotes

[1] Janet Aldridge, The Meadow-Brook Girls Cross Country (Akron, Ohio: Saafield, 1913), p. 168.

[2] Aldridge, p. 133.

[3] Edith Bancroft, Jane Allen: Center (New York: Cupples and Leon, 1920), p. 180.

[4] James P. Jones, "Nancy Drew, WASP Super Girl of the 1930's," Journal of Popular Culture, 6, No. 4 (1973), 708.

[5] Jones, p. 715.

[6] Enid Bagnold, National Velvet (Toronto: William Heinemann, 1935).

[7] Helen Hull Jacobs, Laurel for Judy (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1945), p. 7.

[8] Jacobs, p. 15.

[9] Jacobs, p. 211.

[10] Helen Hull Jacobs, Center Court (New York: A. S. Barnes, 1950), p. 239.

[11] Helen Hull Jacobs, Proudly She Serves (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1953).

[12] Amelia Elizabeth Walden, Three Loves Has Sandy (New York: Scholastic Book Services, 1955), p. 6.

[13] Amelia Elizabeth Walden, Victory for Jill (New York: William Morrow, 1953).

[14] Lee Wyndam, Golden Slippers (New York: Scholastic Book Services, 1974).

[15] Catherine Blanton, Hold Fast to Your Dreams (New York: Archway Paperbacks, 1955).

[16] Jacobs, Laurel for Judy, p. 53.

[17] Jacobs, Proudly She Serves, p. 74.

[18] Walden, Victory for Jill, p. 211.

[19] Walden, My Sister Mike (Berkley: Berkeley Publishing, 1956), p. 68.

[20] Walter Evans, "The American Boys: A Study of the Boys' Sports Fiction," Journal of Popular Culture, 6, No. 1 (1972), 104.

[21] Leslie Zebrowitz McArthur and Susan V. Eisen, "Achievements of Male and Female Storybook Characters as Determinants of Achievement Behavior by Boys and Girls," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 33, No. 4, (1976), 467-73.

Chapter 5

A HISTORICAL REVIEW OF ACTIVE ADULT FEMALES IN FICTION BEFORE 1958

Physically active adult females have long been characters in fiction, though infrequently so. Active fictional women, while few in number, speak out in support and enjoyment of their sport or exercise. These early female characters expressed a need and a desire to be physically active, and these fictional females had positive, even euphoric attitudes toward their activities. However, unlike the juvenile fictional female athlete the adult fictional female athlete may be physically active, but her involvement places her under considerable duress.

The personal joy discovered in physical activity is seen in George Eliot's Dorothea, the major female character in Middlemarch.

> Most men thought her bewitching when she was on horseback. She loved the fresh air and the various aspects of the country, and when her eyes and cheeks glowed with mingled pleasure she looked very little like a devotee.[1]

The expression of pure joy derived from physical exertion emerges from the characters of D. H. Lawrence

and Willa Cather. Gudrun, in Women in Love, describes a toboggan run as the most complete moment of her life.[2] Willa Cather's My Antonia is full of active women, enjoying their physical prowess. Sally, a minor character, is described in the following passage:

> Sally, the tomboy with short hair was a year younger. She was nearly as strong as I, and uncannily clever at all boys' sports. Sally was a wild thing, with sun burned yellow hair, bobbed about her ears, and a brown skin, she never wore a hat. She raced all over town on one roller skate, often cheated at "keens," but was such a quick shot one couldn't catch her at it.[3]

The country girls who came to town are described in glowing terms:

> Physically they were almost a race apart, and out of door work had given them a vigor which, when they got over their first shyness on coming to town, developed into a positive carriage and freedom of movement. . . .[4]

In contrast, the non-active city girls seem pallid and wan:

> That was before the day of high school athletics. Girls who had to walk more than half a mile to school were pitied. There was not a tennis court in the town; physical exercise was thought rather inelegant for the daughters of well-to-do families . . . their muscles seemed to ask but one thing . . . not to be disturbed.[5]

F. Scott Fitzgerald created Jordan Baker, an athletic female in The Great Gatsby who, in the eyes of

the narrator, has enhanced her beauty through her athletic training.[6] She stands out because of the assured and jaunty way she moves. So too does the character Brett, in Ernest Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises.[7] Brett is an attractive woman because of her mannish attire, masculine mannerisms, and masculine activities. John Steinbeck also makes note of the woman longing for physical testing and physical activity. In the Acts of King Arthur and His Noble Knights, Lady Lyne says:

> A little girl, hating embroidery I watched the young boys practicing and I hated the hobbles of a gown. I was a better rider than they, a better hunter, as I proved, and alone with Quintain I proved myself with spear. Only the accident of girlness prevented me from being more than equal to the boys.[8]

Lady Lyne desires the challenge of mastering physical skills, her life is incomplete without activity. Other fictional women are portrayed as desiring to be physically active and finding it important to them when they are active. Others desire physical activity and find the challenge of mastering a skill a way to self-discovery and self-fulfillment.

Kate Chopin's female protagonist in The Awakening, Mrs. Pontellier, masters the techniques of swimming and finds this success to be part of the catalyst which changes her whole life. The confidence to move out in the water parallels her attempts to move out in the

mainstream of life, to act and think as she never had before. As Chopin's heroine grows in physical abilities, emotional and mental horizons are also expanded. "But the very passions themselves were aroused within her soul, swaying it, lashing it, as the waves daily beat upon her splendid body."[9]

Female characters who enjoy and want physical activity are found in fictional works before 1958. These characters express a desire for sport and athletic involvement and physical exertion for the immediate pleasure it brings and for the contributions the mastery of physical skills brings to their self-awareness. However, unlike young fictional female athletes, active, adult fictional females have no period of grace. An ardent devotion to sports has no immunity from social constraints that attempt to dissuade adult females from too intense an interest in physical activity.

Paul Willis, in his article, "Women in Sport," has written that the popular view of women who engage in sport activities is one of incredulity and oddness. He writes that some way of rationalizing the existence of the female athlete must occur and that this happens by treating this social anomaly--the female athlete--with humor and sexual innuendos.[10] These methods are apparent in fiction, but literary messages add another omen. Denigration and unhappy endings are the lot of the

athletic female character. Invariably, fictional, physically active women come to no good.

In this historical review examples of these methods of treatment are apparent. Female athletes in adult novels are characterized in a humorous manner, are tempted by overwhelming sexual desires, or are subjected to adverse happenings. Diversion, perversion, or affliction are the consequences of an ardent interest in physical activity.

Willis further comments on the use of humor when he notes that a subject is treated with humor when there is uncertainty and anxiety about the subject of their role. Willis believes that female athletes are treated with humor because they create anxiety by threatening the boundaries of what has traditionally been male territory.[11] Certainly humor and cynicism are key literary approaches in dealing with women in athletics.

"Baseball Hattie" by Damon Runyon is a short story which typifies the way that the above literary devices are used. Baseball Hattie is not an attractive woman. Her language is obscene and her physical power so overwhelming that; "having hit one man so hard he remained an imbecile the rest of his days."[12] She does not keep her husband's love, nor does she make friends with the other baseball players' wives. Even in her old age she is an ugly, humorous caricature. She is "nothing but an old bag."[13] Baseball Hattie marries one of the best

left-handed pitchers around; when she hears he is going to fix a game she blows his pitching arm off with a .38-caliber Colt revolver.[14] Heavily laced with irony and derision the message implies women meddling in sports, even as fans, are dangerous.

Ring Lardner is another author who treats women's involvement in sport with humor and scorn. In his story, "A Caddy's Diary," a succinct summary of the impropriety of females on the greens is given. The caddy does concede women are good to look at, but they are short on tips and never improve in game skills.[15]

Janet Bates is another fictional female golfer. She is a character created by P. G. Wodehouse. Like most of Wodehouse's female golfers, Janet's involvement and devotion to the game is for ridiculous and strange reasons that cause absurd occurrences. In the story "Jane Gets Off the Fairway," the reader discovers Jane has given up the game of golf because of an infatuation for a writer. However, an unusual event pushes her back to the greens.

> She blinked, hoping against hope that she had been mistaken. But no. When she opened her eyes and looked again she saw what she had seen before.
>
> The child was holding the mashie all wrong.
>
> "Braid!" gasped Jane in agony.
>
> All the mother-love in her was shrieking at her, reproaching her. She realized how sorely she had neglected her duty as a mother! Long ere this, had she been worthy of that sacred relation, she would have been brooding over her child, teaching him at her knee the correct

> Vardon grip, shielding him from bad habits, seeing to it that he did not get his hands in front of the ball, . . .[16]

Probably the epitome of ribald humor created at the expense of women honestly devoted to athletics is the character, Pussy (Figure 2). She is number 99, a Viking of a girl, who can kick, tackle, pass, score and win football game after football game for her school and team. She stars in Hopton and Balliol's book Pink Pants. Though portrayed as more highly skilled than any male in the book, she is ludicrous, as this dialogue attests:

> Having thrown this perfect pass, the big player watched a tiny halfback muff it, and then came trotting up to Reggie and made the most extraordinary remark I ever heard on a football field.
>
> "Somebody has swiped my lipstick out of my private dressing room!"
>
> "Lipstick!" barked Reggie. "I don't consider myself responsible for your dammed lipstick."
>
> "I think you're me-ee-an!" said Number 99, stretching out the word "mean" till it was as long as a cat's meow. "If that's how you're going to talk, I'll complain to President Frye."[17]

Willis says that humor is a way of handling stress and uncertainty. Freud's explanation of why certain subjects are treated with humor is also worth considering. Freud maintained that humor was an expression of subconscious desires. Authors often develop female athletic characters along humorous or "tongue-in-cheek" styles, whether it is a method of handling stress or a

Figure 2. Pussy

Source: Ralph Y. Hopton and Anne Balliol, Pink Pants (New York: Vanguard Press, 1935), p. 31.

method of expressing unfilled wishes for things to be different than they are, female athletes are often lampooned in fictional stories.

Buffoonery is only one characteristic of the active female in the literature before 1958. Often athletic females in fiction are described in derogatory ways, especially in the area of sexual desires. Writers combine a female's love of activity with unusual sexual proclivities. These subtle and indirect characterizations suggest the active female is either a wanton heterosexual or a homosexual.

As a woman on a ship is thought to bring bad luck, a woman in athletics is taboo. Fictional events suggest that women in sports are, at best, a distraction to the manly strivings for sporting excellence and, at worst, a danger to the sexual purity of the woman herself. There seems to be the implication that females who are driven to master physical challenges are driven by sexual passions to either seduce all men on the field or seduce all the women they can. Passions, misdirected toward athletics, act as a warning that uncontrollable sexual drives lie near the surface. Often writers do a very subtle job of conveying this, as in the characterization of the innocuous but tempting Helga Sorenson.

Helga is a Scandinavian shot put champion, but her true interest is in Geordie MacTaggart from Scotland, representing England in the shot put event. These

characters appear in Geordie, by David Walker. Helga's enticements could have been lethal, except for Geordie's strong power to resist. Geordie is able to win the Olympic shot putting event and save himself for his own true love. Helga's character and what she symbolizes are summarized by Geordie toward the end of the book, "soft delightful wicked Helga who meant nothing to him."[18]

The sexual danger of the female athlete can be subtly portrayed. It can also be boldly portrayed, with an implicit warning. D. H. Lawrence is one author who has set this precedent. Lawrence's active, physically involved women are usually characterized by strong sexual drives which are often expressed in lesbian relationships.

In his novel, The Rainbow, the character, Miss Inger, is revealed. Miss Inger is described as fine, upright, and with athletic bearing. "She was proud and free as a man, yet exquisite as a woman."[19] Miss Inger was a swimmer, a rower, and a lover of the physical challenge. It is in a swimming class, taught by Miss Inger and taken by Ursula, that their physical desires for each other begin. It is a swim at night where their love is consummated.

> And the elder held the younger close against her, close, as they went down, and by the side of the water, she put her arms around her, and kissed her. And she lifted her in her arms, close, saying softly:

> "I shall carry you into the water."
> Ursula lay still in her mistress's arms, her forehead against the beloved maddening breast.
> "I shall put you in," said Winifred.
> But Ursula twined her body about her mistress.[20]

Sexual innuendos about fictional female athletes continue and become more common in adult literature written between 1958 and 1978. Patterns started in earlier literature are frequently more vivid in the later literature. The female athlete as a temptress and the linking of the characteristics of physical aptitude and the inclination toward lesbian involvements are recurrent themes in the novels reviewed for the study.

Ridicule, scorn, seduction and perversion should be enough to keep most women from taking their sports or physical training too seriously. Another challenge that is frequently presented in the fictional literature is adversity.

Most of the female characters discussed earlier in this chapter have luckless outcomes. Dorothea has a miserable marriage. Gudrun cannot find a satisfying personal relationship, while the epitome of Cather's country girls, Lena, rejects marriage for the status of being "kept." Jordan is a liar and a cheat, Brett is in the process of self-destruction, Steinbeck's Lady Lyne is bent on destroying others, and Mrs. Pontellier does destroy herself.

The odds for a happy ending are not great. George Eliot's Dorothea seems to be a wise woman when she considers giving up riding.

> Riding was an indulgence which she allowed herself in spite of conscientious qualms; she felt that she enjoyed it in a pagan sensuous way and always looked forward to renouncing it.[21]

Smart girl, for the literary allusions found in these novels suggest that striving for physical achievement and perfection can be a bad experience for an adult female.

The sports skills a girl should be adept at, and the games a female should master, are implied in the following poem:

> To Kate, Skating Better Than Her Date
>
> Wait, Kate! You skate at such a rate
> You leave behind your skating mate.
> Your splendid speed won't you abate?
> He's lagging far behind you, Kate.
> He brought you on this skating date
> His shy affection thus to state,
> But you on skating concentrate
> And leave him with a woeful weight
> Pressed on his heart. Oh, what a state
> A man gets into, how irate
> He's bound to be with life and fate
> If, when he tries to promulgate
> His love, the loved one turns to skate
> Far, far ahead to demonstrate
> Superior speed and skill. Oh, hate
> Is sure to come of love, dear Kate,
> If you so treat your skating mate.
> Turn again, Kate, or simply wait
> Until he comes, then him berate
> (Coyly) for catching up so late.
> For, Kate, he knows your skating's great,
> He's seen your splendid figure eight,
> He is not here to contemplate
> Your supersonic skating rate--

That is not why he made the date.
He's anxious to expatiate
On how he wants you for his mate.
And don't you want to hear him, Kate?
--David Daiches[22]

Fictional material treats the female athlete with humor, sexual innuendos, or adversity. One does not know whether to laugh or cry at the exploits of fictional female athletes.

Chapter 5 Endnotes

[1] George Eliot, Middlemarch, ed. Gordon Ray (Boston: Riverside Editions, Houghton Mifflin, 1961), p. 7.

[2] D. H. Lawrence, Women in Love (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, 1977), p. 472.

[3] Willa Cather, My Antonia (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1954), p. 149.

[4] Cather, p. 198.

[5] Cather, pp. 198-99.

[6] F. Scott Fitzgerald, The Great Gatsby (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953).

[7] Ernest Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises (New York: Scribner and Sons, 1961).

[8] John Steinbeck, The Acts of King Arthur and His Noble Knights (New York: Ballantine Books, 1976), p. 210.

[9] Kate Chopin, The Awakening and Other Stories (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), p. 230. It is only fair to add that swimming out till tired is how she ends her life. It is both a symbolic opening and closing of her life.

[10] Paul Willis, "Performance and Meaning: A Socio-Cultural View of Women in Sport," a paper presented at the Women's Sport Symposium, Univ. of Birmingham, England, Sept. 1973 (rev.).

[11] Willis, p. 25.

[12] Damon Runyon, "Baseball Hattie," in A Treasury of Damon Runyon, ed. Clark Kinnaird (New York: Modern Library, 1931).

[13] Runyon, p. 329.

[14] Runyon, p. 325.

[15] Ring Lardner, "A Caddy's Diary," in The Sporting Spirit, ed. Robert J. Higgs and Neil B. Isaacs (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977).

[16] P. G. Wodehouse, "Jane Gets Off the Fairway," in The Golf Omnibus (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973), p. 286.

[17] Ralph Y. Hopton and Anne Balliol, Pink Pants (New York: Vanguard Press, 1935), pp. 30-33.

[18] David Walker, Geordie (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1950), p. 190.

[19] D. H. Lawrence, The Rainbow (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, 1976), p. 337.

[20] Lawrence, p. 340.

[21] Eliot, p. 7.

[22] David Daiches, "To Kate, Skating Better Than Her Date," in Sprints and Distances, ed. Lillian Morrison (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1965), p. 150.

Chapter 6

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

What has been described, so far, are random images that indicate a pattern in the fictional treatment of the female athlete. Cursory reading confirms that fictional women in sports are most active when young, but as they mature many forms of discouragement occur to moderate or cancel their activity interests. Characterizations of adult athletic females are often humorous, deviant, or destructive.

An attempt was made to illustrate that this impression of fictional patterns in the treatment of female athletes was not just part of the contemporary trend in literature which deals with more destructive, self-annihilating themes. Historical reviews of juvenile literature and adult literature, though also random and certainly not exhaustive, showed some evidence of this conformity in the literary treatment of physically active females. A much more systematic approach was needed to justify the assertion that this literary pattern was predictable, yet not completely realistic. Therefore, a more stringent procedure was

utilized to look at contemporary fiction written between 1958 and 1978.

Books selected for this study were delimited by four parameters, the fictional works included in this study:

1. Had major or minor characters that were female athletes or females that were engaged in physical activities under competitive conditions.
2. Had a twentieth-century setting.
3. Had been written or translated into English.
4. Had been published between 1958 and 1978.

Definition of Terms

Contemporary: The twenty-year period, 1958 to 1978, was chosen for two reasons. The major reason was to limit the number of volumes of bibliographic sources that would have to be reviewed, as the number of fictional works published yearly is numerous. To extend the investigation of fictional works to cover the twentieth century would have been too immense a task. The second reason for selecting the time period 1958 to 1978 was to cover fictional works describing our present social setting, since one of the major objectives of the study was to collect impressions of the modern female athlete.

Female Athlete: Any female in fictional literature who engages in physical activities under competitive conditions, either against herself or others, for the enjoyment of sport, the improvement of physical skills,

and/or the improvement of endurance and strength was defined as an athlete. The wording is meant to encompass more than the limitations now associated with the phrase, sport activities. This was done primarily to allow female dancers and females who might be engaged in individual conditioning exercises to be included in the study. Neither activity is classified as sport.

Popular Fictional Literature: Seven bibliographic sources were used to locate fictional works for this study. If the book was listed in any of these seven current fiction indices and if the novel or juvenile fiction had a major or minor character who was a female athlete, then the work was included as popular fictional literature and reviewed for this study.

Portrayal of the Female Athlete: The physical description of the female athlete, her self-image, her sport or activity, her degree of commitment to her activity, and society's reaction to her as a result of her activity are the aspects of "portrayal" that are considered in this dissertation. Information about these aspects of "portrayal" come from the following sources: the author's description of a female athlete, a character's description or discussion of a female athlete, or the female athletic character's description or discussion of herself.

Search Methods for Locating Fictional Material with Athletic Female Characters

The search for contemporary fiction with female athletes involved these bibliographic sources:

1. The Book Finder. An annotated bibliography of juvenile fiction ordered by thematic content.

2. The Book Review Digest. A synopsis of literary works, compiled yearly, that have received at least three reviews by various periodicals.

3. The Children's Catalogue. A cumulative, annotated listing of fiction and non-fiction for children, recommended by librarians for inclusion in all libraries.

4. The Fiction Catalogue. A cumulative annotated listing of adult fiction by thematic content.

5. The Cumulative Fiction Index. A listing of fiction published in Britain by thematic content.

6. The Junior High School Library Catalogue and The Senior High School Library Catalogue. A cumulative annotated listing of fiction and non-fiction recommended by librarians for inclusion in junior and senior high school libraries.

7. Michael Vincent Oriard's "A Check List of American Sports Fiction."

8. Suggestions from fellow students, professors, and friends.

No prepared bibliography was discovered whose thematic heading was the "fictional female athlete," nor is the subject heading "female athletes" or "sports stories for females" used in any of the bibliographies of fiction. The difficulty in locating fictional sources forced the author to make use of the eighth source for finding novels which highlight female athletes; namely, suggestions from individuals. Any book mentioned whose contents met the study's parameters was analyzed.

Bibliographic volumes that contained fictional works published between 1958 and 1978 were reviewed. The following subject headings were scrutinized: athletes, athletics, ballet, baseball, basketball, boxing, bull-fighting, coaching, college life, cycling, dance, fishing, football, girls, girls' school, horse racing, jogging, mountain climbing, running, school life, scuba, skating, skiing, swimming, tennis, and women. If the bibliography included a story summary or story review it was checked to see if a female athlete appeared in the novel. Where no story summary was available, the book title or the subject heading under which the book was listed was used as a criterion for this first selection process. Most indexes of fiction did not have annotated entries, which meant the latter methods, subject headings or book titles, had to be used. With these procedures, books with female athletes could have been overlooked if the book's title gave no indication of a sport or

physical activity theme or if the book was not listed under a sport or physical activity heading.

All books, in this initial screening process, were searched, using the card catalogue at Rutherford Library, University of Alberta. If the volumes were not in the Rutherford collection, they were requested through the Interlibrary Loan Service.

Books that were located using this process were skimmed for female athletic characters. If a book had been listed in a bibliographic source without story summaries, this was the only way to tell if female athletes were part of the plot. Many books were rejected at this stage, for though they dealt with sporting and athletic themes, they contained no female athletic characters.

A book was reviewed in detail, when a female athlete was found. Once discovered, a classification and ordering of information concerning the female's sport involvement was completed. A general information sheet was developed for this purpose (see Appendix B: General Information Sheet for Summarizing Data on Physically Active Fictional Females). This information sheet was not intended to provide an indepth, statistical content analysis. It was simply a procedure for ordering the descriptive elements of the athletic female's characterization and society's response to her. The data on these general information sheets was then tabulated to

ascertain the general characterization of women involved in physical activity and society's response to them as perceived by the authors.

Furthermore, as each book was read, significant descriptive passages or dialogues concerning the female athlete were noted and duplicated. The purpose of this approach was to provide material to illustrate points summarized in the thesis. Significant descriptive passages about the female athlete's portrayal came directly from the author or indirectly via the female athletic character or another character in the book who gave descriptions of the female athlete and her sport involvement.

Some criteria for assessing the "real" world was needed. It might be that most female athletes are humorous or deviant, though that was not the author's perception. A summary of collected sociological data on females in sport was decided upon as the standard by which the fictional portrayal would be measured.

Methodology for Summarizing the Social Science Data on the Female Athlete

Sociological studies reviewed in this dissertation investigated these aspects of the female athlete:

1. General descriptive parameters: (a) age; (b) sport or physical activity involved in; (c) degree of involvement; that is, how often and how long they

participated; and (d) how the athlete was socialized into sport.

2. The athlete's personal response to sport involvement.

3. Society's response to female sport participation.

The years 1958 to 1978 were also used as the boundary for the sociological studies; since this data was to serve as the touchstone for comparing the credibility of the fictional portrayal, the author felt the time periods of the fictional and the factual sources should be the same. The Women and Sport Information Retrieval System, collected by Dr. M. Ann Hall, Physical Education Department, University of Alberta, was the starting point for the sociological data search.

The bibliographies listed in the back of each of these studies were also reviewed to find relevant material. Any article which dealt with the descriptive information outlined above and which fell within the time period was reviewed and summarized to determine a composite image of the female athlete as she was presented in sociologically based women and sport studies. The sociologically based composite portrayal was then used as the prototype for comparing the fictional composite portrayal.

Chapter 7

THE SOCIOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF THE WOMAN IN SPORT: A TYPICAL INDIVIDUAL

> The simple descriptive information . . . organized and presented in this chapter does not turn up special features that would set off women who take their sport involvement very seriously from those who comprise the general population.[1]
>
> The findings also demand our acceptance of the women athlete primarily as a young woman and secondarily as one who is interested in activity and competition. . . .[2]

In trying to assess the normalcy of fictional characterizations, some index of reality is needed. It would be difficult to say that creating a Frankenstein monster was an unusual activity for a doctor unless we knew something about physicians in the non-fictitious world. Though sociological data develops an image of an "average" individual that does not truly exist, it does provide a standard for comparison. For this study, sociological research on women and sport is used as a normative standard. It is assumed that information gathered from these studies presents a consolidated statement of facts about the female athlete.

The most important piece of information to be gleaned from all the studies reviewed is how typical the

female athlete is. Her factual inventory represents essentially the same characteristics that would be found in a large sampling of North American females. The female athlete is not a deviation from the norm. Sociological studies reviewed looked at general descriptive parameters of the female athlete and her personal response to activity. In none of these studies do women in sport seem to be an aberration.

Studies that attempted to measure social response and attitudes about female athletes and activity for women were also reviewed. In general, both males and females believe activity is not harmful for girls. However, neither do people believe activity for girls is essential or vitally important.

The most frequently occurring fact about the female athlete is her youth. The average age is stated as 15.5 years in some studies, with less than 15 percent of the female athletes above 21 years of age.[3] Average heights and weights of girls studied in the various investigations give no indication that females in sport are gross or huge. Most fall well within the average dimensions of North American females. The only variations seem to be, less body fat and a greater vital capacity.[4]

There is no description that would serve as "the usual family" from which a female athlete comes. Demographic data reveals that females interested in sport come from large-sized families, small-sized families,

rich families, and poor families. Generally though, females from higher socioeconomic groups participate more frequently in sport activities. Women in sport can have been single children or have just brothers or just sisters or both brothers and sisters. There is no consistent picture. Most girls found their families supportive of their activity interest, and it was usually through the family that the first exposure to sport occurred.[5] There is some contradiction as to which parent acted as the initial catalyst for the girl's sport involvement. Adrian, Hulac, Klinger, and Epperson's investigations suggest that it might be the father,[6] while Kennedy suggests that the mother may be the prime factor.[7]

There are women now participating in almost every conceivable sport from bullfighting to wrestling. The sports more commonly participated in are basketball, swimming, and gymnastics.[8] Evidence suggests that sport selection might be a function of social class, with more team involvement from females in lower socioeconomic groups while involvement in individual or dual sports generally has a greater percentage of females from higher economic brackets.[9]

Trying to describe a typical female athlete's personality seems impossible. Berlin states:

> . . . the sum and substance of the above data and their analyses fails to render conclusive evidence of relationship differences and/or

> effects of competitive sport on the psychological phenomenon referred to as personality.[10]

Nevertheless, studies on athletic personalities are most abundant. The hope of discovering some quality, some personality quirk, that would or could predict athletic success must have something to do with the volume of studies that continue to be done in this area. These studies fall under three headings: studies attempting to uncover personality differences between athletes and non-athletes, studies trying to show how the personality of the highly skilled competitive athlete differs in personality from the recreational athlete, and studies that attempt to evaluate how the personalities of those who participate in various sports differ. Yet no "athletic personality" emerges. In reference to personality inventories, Malumphy states:

> One year there are only three differences, the second year there are ten. Despite these inconsistencies there appears to be more similarities than differences between women athletes and the general college population.[11]

If one takes a brief look at a number of personality studies, the ambiguity of the results can be seen. The female athlete is catalogued in all these ways: dominant but sensitive, adventurous but needing nurturance, radical but not neurotic, self-sufficient but needing affiliation, extroverted but anxious, aggressive but relaxed. A confusing picture. O'Connor and Webb

have stated that personality summaries of athletes have more contradictions and uncertainties than conclusions.[12]

Part of the problem is, of course, the multiple interpretations possible for the concept of personality. Other factors, contributing to the lack of clarity in this research area, are the diversity of testing instruments and the diversity of groups studied. These inconsistencies make any comprehensive statement about the personality of the female athlete difficult. What is much more lucid are the self-assessments of the female athletes.

Female athletes often state that they feel good about themselves and what they are doing. Studies have indicated that a good self-perception is one measure of mental health,[13] and that participation in sport is a significant factor in good mental health.[14] It is interesting to note that female athletes score higher than non-athletes on psychological well being tests and body image evaluations.[15] Female athletes generally have a positive self-image and attitude. There seems little evidence to indicate that depression and self-destruction are usual behaviors for the female athlete, though fictional portrayals suggest this.

The positive images and feelings of female athletes are reported in a number of studies. However, these benefits are not mentioned as frequently by women in team sports[16] as they are by women in individual activities

like track and field, swimming, and dance. It has been suggested that because female athletes do not receive abundant social support, they would experience role conflict, frustration, and unhappiness. This does not seem to be the case. Most women in sport, who have been surveyed, do not feel role conflict; most feel what they are doing is enjoyable and proper. The pleasure of movement is a real motivating factor for many and one of the more commonly given reasons for participation in a physical activity.[17] Other reasons also given are: the ascetic aspect, the discipline, training, and push to become best,[18] or the need to achieve.[19] Though most female athletes appear to enjoy their sport involvement, does society approve?

On direct questionnaires and inquiries respondents do not object to women in athletics or activity for women. Both sexes and various age groups have been interviewed. The results are positive, or at least no longer obviously negative. Yet, there is a hesitancy about whether sport activity is really important for girls.

Elementary school children generally held favorable attitudes toward female athletes; for most respondents this attitudinal valence increased when they themselves were sport participants. Selby and Lewko measured grade school children's attitudes toward female involvement in sport. They used a Likert-type questionnaire (CATFIS) to

assess the feelings of 106 girls and 264 boys in grades 3 through 6.[20] These children were participating in a sports program sponsored by a YMCA. The same inventory was given to 344 girls and 287 boys in grades 3 through 9 who had no activity program. The questionnaire was given to both groups twice, once before the first group's activity program began and then at the conclusion of the activity program both active and non-active groups were again questioned. Selby and Lewko's summarized findings were that, overall, the groups became more positive toward female involvement from the time of the pretest to the posttest. A few interesting variations should be noted.

> The results of the study indicated that females at all grade and participation levels had significantly more favorable attitudes than the males. At grades 3 and 4 male P and NP were quite similar in their attitudes, as were female P and NP, but at grades 5 and 6 the attitudes of each sex group diverged. Male NP were more positive than male P while female NP were less positive.[21]

Buchanan, Blankenbaker, and Cotton examined the attitudes of 422 boys and 380 girls in grades 4, 5, and 6. In a questionnaire they developed, the students were asked what they liked to do at school and what characteristics they felt would make one popular.[22] Most children felt achieving good grades was most important to them, but felt the most popular individuals were those categorized as athletes. This was especially so in the

boys' responses.[23] Girls generally felt academic success was more important than athletic skills.

Elementary age girls, grades 1 through 5, preferred a slender ectomorphic body type, not one too big or too bulky. This fact was assessed in a study by Caskey and Felker. They asked young girls to assign adjectives to three silhouettes of female body types. The lean, slim ectomorph outline received more favorable adjectives.[24] There is some evidence that a rigid adherence to the attitude that sports are for boys only is weakening. Though athletic activities for girls may be more readily accepted, it does not seem to be perceived by young girls as a vital and essential activity.

Abel and Knapp questioned 600 girls in forms I, IV, and VI and had them list their favorite activities. They found that the girls preferred physical activity to non-physical activity, but serious training for sports and games was unpopular. Recreational activities that were "fun," like swimming, were the most popular.[25] There is not abundant research investigating grade school boys' and girls' attitudes toward females playing sports. What few studies there are seem to show an acceptance of athletic involvement for girls and the beginning of a gaining popularity for the importance of sport involvement for girls.

In 1977 Buhrmann and Bratton interviewed female athletes in interscholastic sport activities in six,

small, rural towns in Alberta. In this study, the females felt that training for sports and sports competitions were important and necessary for status.[26]

In our society where active young females are numerous, but active older females are not, sex role activity patterns could vary with age. It would then seem logical that a decrease in favorability of attitudes toward females in sport would also occur. However, this does not appear to be so.

As far back as 1941, adult women have expressed highly favorable attitudes toward physical activity as a means of recreation. Using a Thurstone-type scale, on a questionnaire devised by herself, Moore found college women had a positive attitude toward physical education, though few of them were active in sports for more than four hours a week.[27]

Bell and Walters questioned 665 female freshmen students and 151 female senior students at the University of Michigan in 1953. They devised a three-part questionnaire involving a checklist response for background information, questions about the objectives of physical education, and the Wear Attitude Scale. All students rated on the high end of the Wear Scale, which indicates a favorable attitude toward physical education.[28]

Broer, Fox, and Way surveyed 1, 149 college freshmen women. They used the Wear Attitude Inventory and found a very favorable response toward physical education

classes, particularly swimming and tennis.[29] It is important to note here, that respondents were being asked about physical education classes, which might be viewed, by some, as more acceptable than intense athletic competition.

Harres attempted to evaluate attitudes toward intensive athletic competition for girls and women. Thirty-eight statements were selected from McGee's[30] and Heck and Smith's[31] questionnaire to measure attitudes toward desirability of athletic competition. Three hundred undergraduate students, athletes and non-athletes, male and female, responded to the questions using a Likert-type scale. There appeared to be an acceptance of athletic competition for girls and women. The population was favorable in attitude toward athletic competition for girls and there was no significant difference between the attitudes of male and female respondents.[32]

This was supported in the findings of another study. DeBaay, Spaeth, and Busch collected data from 90 male physical education majors and 90 male non-physical education majors. Their devised questionnaire had 10 items relating to participation in physical education and 20 items relating to athletic competition for women. The mean scores achieved by both groups were indicative of a positive attitude toward women in sport participation and athletic competition.[33] In summary, it may be said that

attitudes are generally favorable toward physical activity for women. However, if a woman is physically active and vigorous does she lose her feminine image? This is again a confusing area.

A literature review by Harrison presents both sides of the issue.[34] The investigators Griffin and Hall have found inconsistent responses from questionnaires trying to evaluate the image of the female athlete and the image of the feminine woman. Their studies indicate that these two concepts might be incompatible in the public's mind.[35] On the other hand, Vickers, McCullough, and LeGrand found a favorable relationship between perceived feminine characteristics and the image of the athletic woman. In most of the studies, as was noted earlier, the respondent who was both female and an athlete had the least divergent feelings about athletics and femininity.[36] The situation is well summarized by Marlene Mawson:

> The feminine image in sport is not very well defined--in fact, it is confusing and contradictory from source to source and is thus causing considerable social discomfort and conflict amont Americans concerned with sport.[37]

Though most surveys do not show hostility toward athletic involvement for women, neither can we assume public approval. There are many other manifestations in our society that indicate the popular attitude about

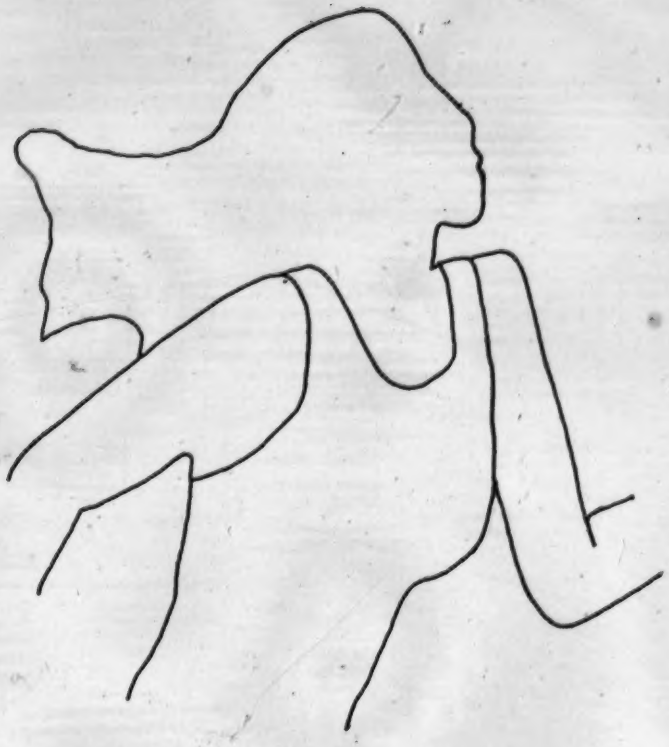
female athletes is not as salutary as it may seem. Certain facts and conditions in our society belie the total acceptance of the female athlete: few females participate, many drop out of activity, many restrictions and limitations are placed on what events they can and cannot enter, little newspaper and television coverage is awarded them, and minimal time and money is allotted for their training.

Sherriff has focused on this situation. As she reports, it is no longer a question of whether sport is good or bad for women; most will concede activity is all right, even healthy. It is a matter of values. The reservations about sports for women in our society revolve around how important this activity is for a female.[38] Sport skill and achievement are integral and essential components of men's roles, but not women's roles. When surveyed, people still assign over 93 percent of certain listed sports as primarily or completely masculine activities. While it may be good for a woman to be active, how active she is and in what areas she participates are clearly defined.[39] If a woman wishes to be an athlete, the public acceptability of this choice depends on what sport she plays. The female swimmer, tennis player, horseback rider, or gymnast is acceptable. The female boxer, wrestler, or football player is much more suspect.

Confounding the attempts to understand the female in sport are the limited number of studies and the poverty of data about adult women in athletics. Sociological data is incomplete. Longitudinal studies of women in sport do not exist or are incomplete. What happens to the female athlete in her thirties, in her forties, or in her fifties is not known. A sociological summary of the mature North American female athlete when she marries or has children has not been put forth. The few autobiographical and biographical articles concur with the sociological data on the young female athlete in that the mature female athlete is a fairly typical individual. More evidence is needed to substantiate this data for the fictional data appears to be a bleak picture.

What is known, is that the real female athlete is an individual and, typical of any one individual from a population sample, she can represent many variations (see Diagram 2). Most often she is proud of her accomplishments and herself. Society gives tacit consent to some of her activities, but also continues to maintain many practices and traditions which inhibit her involvement.

The fictional information summarized in Chapters 1 and 4 suggests that the adult female athlete will probably be an object of social derision and a candidate for unhappy events. The fictional development of the juvenile female athlete, reviewed so far, generally



Fact:

young
average height and weight
activity interest supported by family
happy with sport activity
society says activity is o.k., but not essential

Diagram 2. The Female Athlete in Fact

matches the sociological construct. These fictional patterns need to be rigorously validated. Will they continue to be discovered? Utilizing the procedures outlined in Chapter 6 the following chapters review contemporary literature and do reveal some of the same patterns.

Chapter 7 Endnotes

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Chapter 8

IT'S O.K. WHILE YOU'RE YOUNG: ADOLESCENT FEMALE ATHLETES IN CONTEMPORARY JUVENILE LITERATURE

A recent publication by the Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative states: "Sexism has flourished in children's literature for many years. . . . It continues to do so despite important changes in attitudes and in society . . . ."[1] It is a fact that most books for children still underrepresent females in central roles, plot involvement, pictures, and titles.[2] Females, in juvenile literature, still exist in a world oriented to the importance of men and their activities. The adolescent female's potential for success, achievement and status is most often assigned by her physical attributes (i.e., how attractive she is) and by the males she associates with. There are numerous examples in fictional works for children of this orientation, yet, small changes are being made in the portrayal of females, in literature for the young. In the characterization of young female athletes, a few significant changes can be noted.

Female athletes were often given a positive characterization in contemporary juvenile fiction

reviewed for this study. In the books selected by the procedures outlined in Chapter 5, the active girl was physically attractive, liked by her friends, supported and encouraged by her parents, and strongly committed to her sport. Contemporary juvenile fiction seems to imply that it is acceptable, even desirable for young girls to be active. The juvenile literature of the mid-seventies contains stories where a conscious attempt has been made to allow females the dignity of an existence related to their personal achievements. In a few cases romantic attachments are not stressed and a young female is allowed to be successful, aggressive, and achieving because of her own special talents.

The summarized profile of the young fictional female athlete is consistent with known sociological data. The general information sheets used in this study give a comprehensive presentation that concurs with what is known about young female athletes (see Appendix D: Summary of Information on Fictional Juvenile Female Athletes). That is, they are between the ages of twelve and sixteen, most are Caucasian, and most were introduced to their activity at a young age by a family member or close adult friend.

The young fictional female athlete is portrayed as a popular person, who is most often happy with herself and who gets along well with others. Her family, school friends and neighborhood peers are supportive of her

activity. The only aspect of juvenile sports fiction not in accord with the sociological data is the generalized picture of a young fictional female athlete's appearance. Almost without variation she is described as attractive or cute and almost always she is characterized as having a slender, well-proportioned body.

Authors' selection of activities is varied: platform diving, running, surfing, football playing, softball, baseball, and field hockey are examples of some sports that are featured. The most common activities for fictional girls are horseback riding and tennis.

The non-demographic information, also, reveals some interesting changes. Most important, all of the young athletic heroines discovered have a happy resolution to their stories, which is counter to the fate of the adult fictional female athlete. Though some books still place activity, exercise, and play in a subordinate position to the goal of socializing, most works no longer suggest that an ardent interest in physical activity for young females has any stigma attached to it.

In the story, Delilah, the joy of skill mastery is aptly described. No other ascription is placed on the pleasure of learning to do a lay-up shot well, except the accomplishment of that skill (Figure 3).

> "Let's try a lay-up," he said.
> "No," she said.
> "Why not?" he asked.

Figure 3. Delilah

Source: Carole Hart, Delilah (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), p. 8.

> "I'm not very good at lay-ups," she said, softly.
> "What?" he said.
> "I'm not very good at lay-ups," she said a little louder.
> "I can't hear you," he said.
> "I'm not very good at lay-ups," she shouted.
> "Well," he said, "if you keep telling yourself you're not any good at lay-ups, you'll never get any better."
> He laughed and threw her the basketball.
> "Try one. Let's see."
> She charged down the court, and missed--by a mile.
> "No wonder you're no good. You move like a hurricane. Take it easy. Pretend you're riding on a soft sighing wind."
> And he showed her. Nice and slow and graceful like a dance step. She tried it his way. It worked. She tried it again. And Again. It felt good. She might have played forever. . . . She felt light, as if she were riding on a soft sighing wind. She knew how to do lay-ups.[3]

Isabelle, another young female character in the story, Isabelle the Itch, spends her time organizing activities to buy new running shoes for a race she wants to win. Though she loses the race the value of the activity, in and of itself, is part of Isabelle's maturing process. The desire to run has intrinsic value beyond just winning. This is a special change in juvenile literature, the depiction of activity for females as having inherent worth for their growth as individuals.

Three other books written in the late sixties and seventies also stress activity as being important for individual maturation and not just as an endeavor for improving the "marketability" of a female in the socialization process. In the story, Between Friends, by

Sheila Garrigue, both young females are characterized as having activity interests. Jill, the heroine, has been a competitive swimmer while Dede is receiving special athletic training at her school. The latter character is of particular interest, for Dede is mentally retarded. There is no romantic interest developed for either girl, only the development of their friendship is highlighted. Dede can not become "more attractive" because of her learned athletic skills, but she can and does feel better about herself because she learns the skill of shooting baskets.[4] So too in the story, The Hockey Girls, does Irma gain more for herself in learning and achieving in a physical skill.

In this story, participation in a competitive sport becomes the school's new requirement. Irma does not wish to participate, but she cannot get out of it. As she learns the sport, she begins to like it. Below is a description of the wonder, exhilaration, and thrill of achieving in a sports context.

> The ball was a blur at Irma's feet as she charged in. Somehow she got her stick on it, somehow she scooped, and neither the hands nor the feet of the goalie were quick enough. The ball bounced sweetly against the back of the net.
>
> She had made her first score in a game, and it was the most delirious experience she could remember.[5]

No romantic interest is developed in this story, either.

Between Friends and The Hockey Girls stress activity as being important for itself and individual maturation. The idea of sport being a method for improving the socializing opportunities for young females is not developed. In Pat Richoux's Book, A Long Walk on a Short Dock, the adolescent heroine of this book decides sailing is much more important and vital to her than trying to find a date and steady male companion.[6] A complete "about face" from the earlier patterns occurs when she gives up her romantic schemes to concentrate on sailing competitions.

It is interesting to see current social changes clearly reflected in a few juvenile stories. The most fundamental issue being, not equal opportunity for all, but opportunity for the development of individual human potential. The value of physical activity lies not in the fact that all need to achieve in all physical skills, but in the idea that if an individual has an interest and a talent in an area, whether male or female, they should be allowed to develop this potential. This comes out in Bill J. Carol's novel, Single to Center:

> "I don't think you should go on with this business of trying to be a boy--since you're obviously a girl."
> Jean laughed, "If that's an insult, I didn't mind. But who said I was trying to be a boy?"
> "Well, aren't you?"
> "No, I'm trying to be a third baseman."[7]

Isabella Taves also alludes to contemporary issues about females in sport in her book, Not Bad for a Girl.

This is probably a fictional collage of events in the lives of Pamela Magill, Robby Brunhuber, or Carolyn King, young girls who tried to play on Little League teams. Again the issue is not whether a boy or a girl should play baseball, but rather whether talented individuals should have the chance to develop their abilities.

> . . . they had that great bond in common, their love of baseball. Charlie was a natural born teacher and Sharon an apt pupil. She developed so well under his direction that Charlie, fierce competitor that he was, couldn't bear the idea of her not having her chance to play in the little leagues.[8]

Other questions dealing with current changes in sport are being aired in juvenile literature. In The Tennis Machine, by Helen Hull Jacobs, the main character --an outstanding young female tennis player, is questioned about the inequality of prize money awarded male and female tennis players.[9] It seems that there is conscious plot and character development occurring to highlight current problems. This is worthy of elaboration as it adds another complexity to the study of sociology through literature.

It is apparent, from the discussion in Chapter 2, that if literature can have some influence over society, the influence can be one of stabilizing and justifying current popularly held views or just as easily can be an attempt to shape society toward what the author believes

should be currently held beliefs. When is the author expressing and reflecting current social modes of behavior and when is the author attempting to create or shape what he or she sees as important social behaviors that should be, but are not yet integrated into the society? In some of the examples discussed in this chapter, the approach appears as deliberate propaganda, rather than creative expression.

R. Rozanne Knudson seems to be in the realm of propaganda as one follows the exploits of her main character, Zan, through a series of books. Knudson appears to organize her writing in an attempt to educate others to her beliefs. Zanballer, Zanbanger, and Zanboomer all deal with Zan's attempts to achieve in certain sports and each book features certain issues and controversies concerning the demands of females in sport for more equivalent opportunities (Figure 4).

Zan has a run-in with her principal. The encounter is humorous, yet typical. It summarizes the negative rebuttals: sport is not feminine, athletic competition is not the type of competitive effort a girl should experience, and finally girls will have to give up their sports as soon as they grow up.

> Zan: Sir, was that the contractor you spoke to?
> Manfred: It's none of your business, but yes.
> Zan: And you told him there's no hurry about fixing the floor?

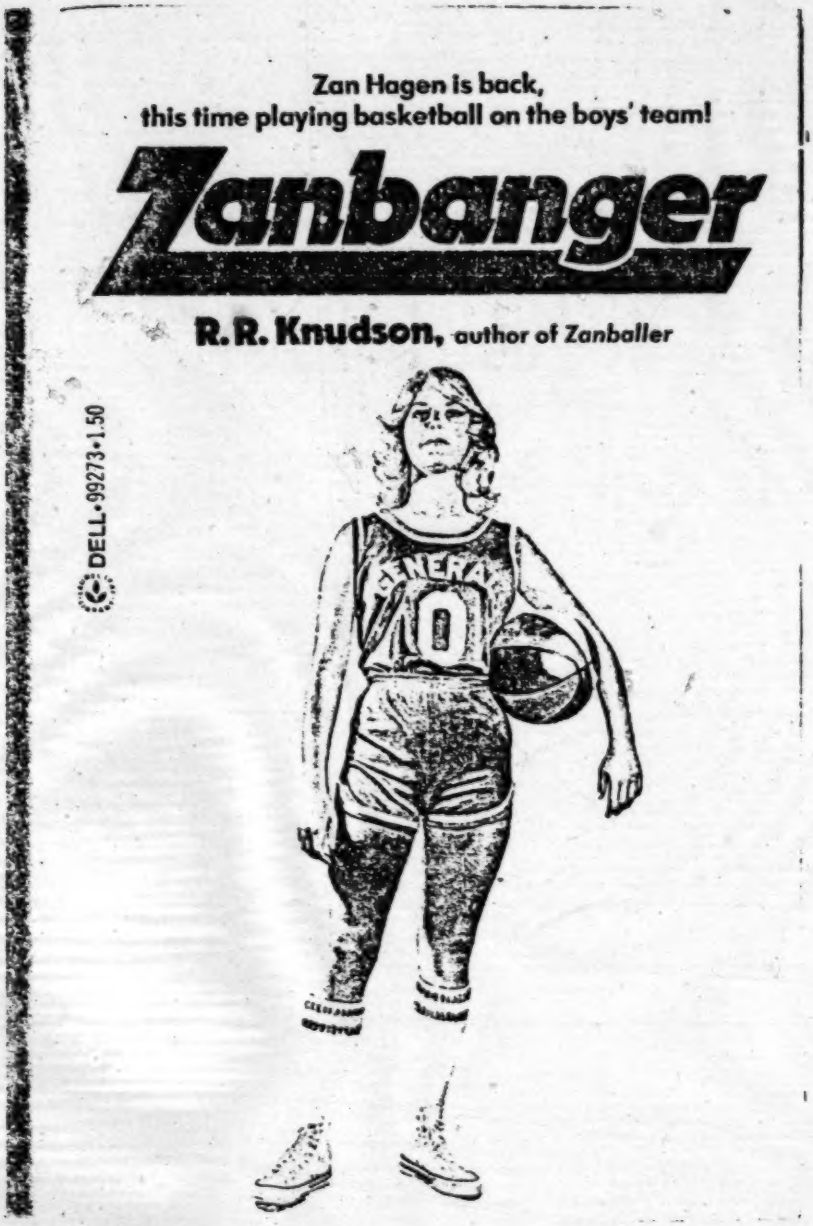


Figure 4. Zan

Source: R. Rozanne Knudson, Zanbanger (New York: Dell Publishing, 1977), cover.

Manfred: Of course I did. The gym needs a complete rebuilding, from the foundations up. A big job. Takes time.

Zan: But sir, basketball practice was supposed to begin next week.

Manfred: And indeed it will. The boys' team is to be bused daily to the YMCA over in Clarendon.

Zan: The boys? What about our team? We hoped to play in the Herald Tournament this spring. We almost made it last year. Please sir, we need a place to practice.

Manfred: Say, now I know who you are. You're that crazy little girl who raised such a ruckus with the builders yesterday. I heard about your antics, believe me. Screaming and kicking. Not very ladylike. You forgot your shirt-waist, too, didn't you? Have you no shame?

Zan: But sir, we were supposed to have intramural play-offs yesterday. And next week basketball practice . . .

Manfred: Yes, yes. But I felt this to be the right time for repairs. And so did the contractor. The "Y" gym has been made available for practice and the boys will play their games away. I've heard that Lee's a strong team on the enemy's court. A real whiz-bang road show. That so?

Zan: But sir, what's to become of the girls' sports without a gym for the season? We don't even have a field to play on. The boys have it for football. (Enter secretary who hands Mr. Manfred a manilla folder. She exits. Mr. Manfred scans contents.)

Manfred: Now then, Suzanne. I see here that you are fourteen, almost fifteen. Fourteen years old: A young woman.

Zan: My name is Zan.

Manfred: I prefer your given name, Suzanne. Softer, more feminine. Yes, Suzanne, you're becoming a lady now. You should cast aside silly ball games and turn to less aggressive, less tomboyish pursuits.

Zan: Like what . . . sir?

Manfred: Well, dear, if you must be a sports fan, why not join the cheerleaders. Classy costumes, a few gentle leaps. Stir up the crowds to cheer for our fighting boys. You'd get to shout into that nifty new electric megaphone.

Zan: Wear those stupid pleated skirts? Feh! I hate maroon. Besides, cheerleaders don't

win anything. They don't score points. They waste their energy.

Manfred: Twirling lighted torches. That should be exciting enough for you, eh? You'd be peaches and cream as a majorette. Running onto the field waving a gold baton. High stepping all over the end zones. Like a real live fashion model. I can hear the music now. Lee's Golden Girl!

Zan: Phoney nonsense. I want to play ball. I like to win.

Manfred: Competition, that seems to be your drive. Well, then, Suzanne, we have proper ways for a young lady to excel. I note here in your record such high marks in English. Did you know that the county spelling bee comes along next month? Suzanne Hagen, Arlington County Spelling Queen. Oh, your school would gain such publicity from that! I shall place your trophy high on that very top shelf. In your years reamining at Lee you could retire that trophy to a permanent niche right beside me.

Zan: To stand forever between the Pillsbury Baking Princess and the Embroiderer-of-the-Year. Oh, no you don't. I want to play ball.

Manfred: Say, you'd look mighty cute in a snappy band costume. You'd get your picture in the Herald. Sequins sparkling. Furry tassels blowing in the wind. White boots dancing . . .

Zan: Dancing is my utter worst thing. And sequins itch. Besides, I can't play an instrument.

Manfred: Never mind that. Any fool can bang a drum . . .

Zan: They never give girls the drum. We always have to play the glockenspiel.

Manfred: Then bang a glockenspiel. You even have time left this season to learn the formations. Tricky things, those marching formations. But according to the I.Q. score recorded here, you can do it. I have every confidence that you'll soon be spelling out "Let's Go, Generals" with the best of them.

Zan: Listen, Mr. Manfred, the only formation I'd march in would have to spell out, "Give the Lee girls a gym." Otherwise that's all drivel. No, I won't march.

Manfred: Or spell?

Zan: Or spell!

Manfred: Or twirl?

Zan: Or twirl!
Manfred: Or cheer?
Zan: Or cheer!
Manfred: Or . . . ?
Zan: Or play the Sousaphone. Or try out for the pep society. Or sing in the fall follies. Or join the projectionists' club. Or run for secretary of the student body. Or enlist in the Future Cosmetologists of America. Or change my name.
Manfred: Now, now . . .
Zan: And I will not dance!
Manfred: Hmmmmmm. These psychological tests here indicate such a stubborn streak. You've proved to me that your first-grade measurements are correct. I feel I can be of no further help to you today.
Zan: But Mr. Manfred . . .
Manfred: Hmmmmmm. I see from the schedule that you're supposed to go to physical education in just a few minutes. Am I correct? My secretary will show you out.[10]

It is not known if this type of writing represents an honest attempt by some authors to present a more realistic picture of young females in sport or if it represents a temporary crusading effort. This latter atmosphere does appear in some of the books quoted. For example, in the book, The Year Mom Won the Pennant, by Matt Christopher, not only is a female the coach of a boys' baseball team, but there is also a black police officer, "the only Negro on the force,"[11] and a Chinese cook, "the owner of the only Chinese-American restaurant in Flat Rock."[12] The story seems contrived to carry out an exercise in the literary exposure of minority characters. The characters in Shrimp's Soccer Goal, by Beman Lord, appear to be developed for the same reason.

In this story a young female elementary school teacher becomes the soccer coach (Figure 5). She carefully explains that she expects girls will play. To make sure other role options are offered some girls can and do become cheerleaders (Figure 6). The critical reader might wonder about the authors' motivation for writing these books, as the story line in many of them is rather superficial.

Whatever the authors' motivation, there are active females portrayed in juvenile literature in a positive manner. In order to keep a balanced perspective, however, other more typical characterizations should be noted. In the historic review of literature prior to 1958 many females involved in sports and physical activities were cast in ancillary roles, in appropriately selected activities or in activities chosen to enhance their social acceptability. Examples of these types of characterizations continue.

It is apparent to many in physical education and athletics that there are certain sports that are deemed more appropriate for females. Swimming, diving, tennis, gymnastics are some of the more acceptable sports, while wrestling, football, heaving, throwing and lifting events are not encouraged for females. This seems to be reflected in literature where most young fictional athletes are characterized as participants in the more acceptable sports. Two examples of these more favorable

Figure 5. The Soccer Coach

Source: Beman Lord, Shrimp's Soccer Goal (New York: Henry Z. Walck, 1970), p. 39.

Figure 6. The Cheerleaders

Source: Beman Lord, Shrimp's Soccer Goal (New York: Henry Z. Walck, 1970), p. 50.

activity interests are horseback riding and tennis, with the "horsey" stories being especially abundant in juvenile literature.

Though horseback riding and jumping are very common fictional activities, the percentage of participants in real life is rather small. Equestrian sports are elite activities requiring a substantial investment in property and money.

Janet Must Ride, by Diana Pullein-Thompson,[13] Mother Wants a Horse, by Diana Walker,[14] Afraid to Ride, by C. W. Anderson,[15] and The Team, by K. M. Peyton[16] are all examples of stories about girls who ride horses. The plots generally involve a girl who wants to ride, is presented with the opportunity to ride; however, some obstacle must be overcome, and usually is. In the end, the heroine conquers all difficulties and wins her event.

Though the activity is only a fantasy for most young female readers, the heroine does have a happy ending. The same basic outline occurs in tennis stories. Tennis Shoes, by Noel Streatfeild,[17] The Tennis Machine, by Helen Hull Jacobs,[18] and Champions Don't Cry, by Nan Gilbert[19] follow similar plot developments. The only variation between "tennis stories" and "horse stories" is the difficulty encountered. In horse stories the obstacle to be overcome is external (i.e., no clothes, no horse, no money) while in tennis the obstacle is usually an internal one (i.e., temper, lack of discipline).

Still the heroine has a happy denouement, something very rarely assigned to adult female athletes. Fictional works imply, by dint of their numerous representations, that certain activities are more socially accepted. There also continues to be the fictional implication that physical activity is of value for the greater social acceptability it can bring. Though some authors of juvenile literature have attempted to represent females whose esteem is not based on their acceptability to males, romantic interests are still primary concerns for many fictional females.

Faith Cummings in the Mystery Player at Left End by Beman Lord knows football is not for her. She is a good enough player to rescue a struggling boys' team from defeat, but at no time in the book does Faith seriously consider her skills and talents in football. She plays only to help out the boys.[20] The female as a sexual decoration is not as blatant in juvenile literature as in adult literature and the romantic attachment and sexual allure seem to have even slightly less stress in the juvenile literature of the 1970s as compared to that literature written prior to 1958. Yet there are still remnants of this approach.

The heroine in Freckled and Fourteen, by Viola Rowe, shifts her interests from basketball to Sammy.[21] The interests of Ruth, in the book, The Team, by K. M. Peyton, switch from horse to handsome male,[22] and even

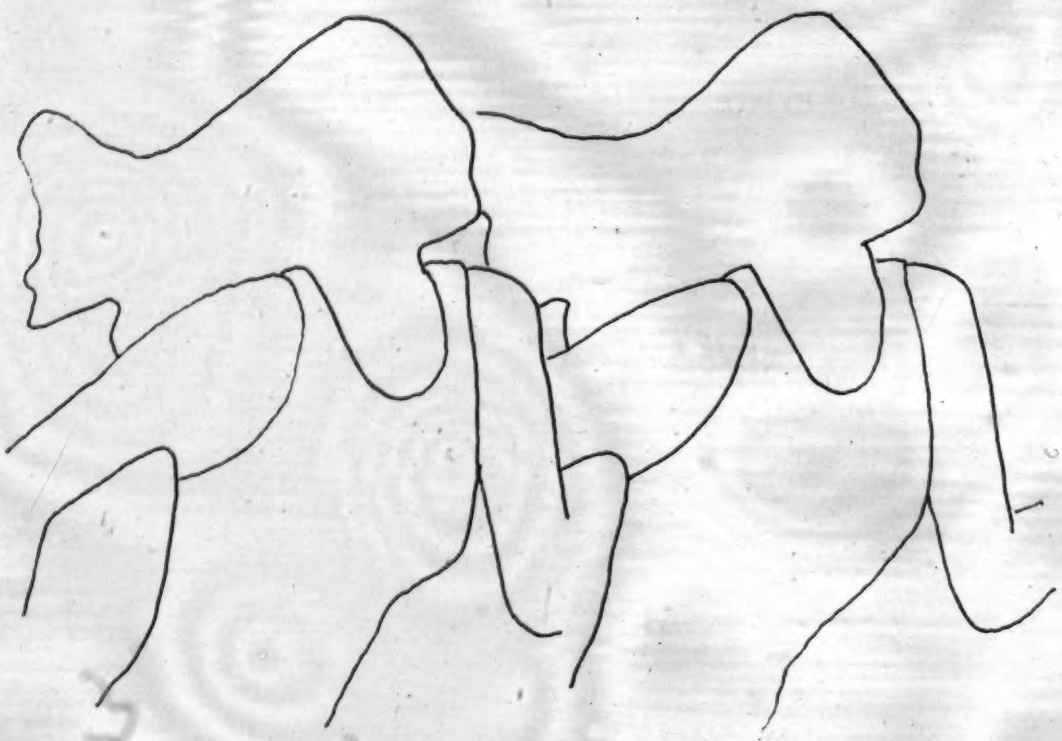
the sports devotee, Gidget, gives up her beloved surfboard riding for romantic concerns.[23]

It is still important, to some, that a girl's talents and skills be relegated to second place. Though an Olympic platform diver, a young female's wiggle and jiggle gets a better score than her dive.

> Dave watched as the girl sliced into the blue waters of the pool. She caused hardly a splash.
>
> Stacy pulled herself out of the pool and reached for a towel. She wore a red, white, and blue tank suit. She jiggled when she walked. They'll never replace "that" with a computer, Dave thought.[24]

When reviewing juvenile literature with young female athletes, it is interesting to note that male coaches still predominate. The female coach is a fictional rarity and most often young fictional female athletes have their first instruction in sports skills from men (see Appendix E: "Who Coached Whom"). This is not pure literary license, however, for most coaches are male.

The fictional and factual images of juvenile athletes are generally in accord. Only a few differences stand out (see Diagram 3). The fictional, juvenile, athletic heroine is most often attractive, almost always treated to happy resolutions and is most often pictured participating in the individual sport activities of tennis and horseback riding. In reality there is probably a greater variety in girls' physical appearances.



Fact:	Fiction:
great variety in physical characteristics	all generally attractive
great variety of team and individual sport activities	majority in elite, individual sport activities
happy and unhappy consequences	happy story resolutions

Diagram 3. The Juvenile Female Athlete in Fact and Fiction

There ought to, also, be a greater variety in the type of activities fictional females are involved in, if the fictional portrayal is to be really reflective of reality. Finally, the greatest inconsistence with the real world is all the fictional happy endings.

The high drop-out rate in sport and the great number of unhappy consequences associated with sport for the young is well known and can be documented in Chapter 3 of Orlick and Botterill's book, Every Kid Can Win.[25] Many girls and boys experience the pressure of competition and find it a negative experience. Often the tactics of coaches, parents, and teachers too intent on winning, take the fun and play element out of sport activities. Many young girls and young boys lose their desire to participate because of inadequate or mis-directed youth sport programs.

Yet, in summarizing the information from the fictional books reviewed, it appears that physical activity for young fictional females is generally o.k. There are too many joyous endings, too many happy wins, too many proud achievements, to conclude that juvenile literature is negative regarding the athletic involvement of females. Rather, juvenile fiction appears to provide many positive sanctions.

> The words had a heavenly ring to them, a sort of gallant marching sound like a band on parade. Sally rolled them slowly off her tongue as she repeated aloud, "Today I am a champion."[26]

Chapter 8 Endnotes

[1] Children's Rights Workshop, ed., Sexism in Children's Books, Facts, Figures and Guidelines, Papers on Children's Literature, no. 2 (London: Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative, 1976), p. 2.

[2] Lenore J. Weitzman, Deborah Eifler, Elizabeth Hokada, and Catherine Ross, "Sex-Role Socialization in Picture Books for Preschool Children," in Sexism in Children's Books, Facts, Figures and Guidelines, ed. Children's Rights Workshop, p. 8.

[3] Carole Hart, Delilah (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), pp. 11-15.

[4] Sheila Garrigue, Between Friends (Scarsdale, N.Y.: Bradbury Press, 1978), p. 136.

[5] Scott Corbett, The Hockey Girls (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1976), p. 99.

[6] Pat Richoux, A Long Walk on a Short Dock (New York: Morrow, 1969).

[7] Bill J. Carol, Single to Center (Austin, Texas: Steck-Vaughn, 1974), pp. 44-45.

[8] Isabella Taves, Not Bad for a Girl (New York: M. Evans, 1972), p. 14.

[9] Helen Hull Jacobs, The Tennis Machine (New York: Scribner, 1972), p. 214.

[10] R. Rozanne Knudson, Zanballer (New York: Delacorte Press, 1972), pp. 26-29.

[11] Matt Christopher, The Year Mom Won the Pennant (Boston: Little, Brown, 1968), p. 19.

[12] Christopher, p. 29.

[13] Diana Pullein-Thompson, Janet Must Ride (London: Trans-World, 1956).

[14] Diana Walker, Mother Wants a Horse (New York: Thomas Crowell, 1978).

[15] C. W. Anderson, Afraid to Ride (London: Macmillan, 1965).

[16] K. M. Peyton, The Team (New York: Thomas Crowell, 1976).

[17] Noel Streatfeild, Tennis Shoes (London: Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1968).

[18] Jacobs, The Tennis Machine.

[19] Nan Gilbert, Champions Don't Cry (New York: Harper & Row, 1960).

[20] Beman Lord, Mystery Player at Left End (New York: Scholastic Book Services, 1964).

[21] Viola Rowe, Freckled and Fourteen (New York: Scholastic Book Services, 1965).

[22] Peyton.

[23] Frederick Kohner, Gidget (New York: Putnam, 1958).

[24] Hal Higdon, The Electronic Olympics (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), p. 18.

[25] Terry Orlick and Cal Botterill, "Why Eliminate Kids?" in Every Kid Can Win (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1975), pp. 15-26.

[26] Gilbert, p. 1.

Chapter 9

DIVERSION, PERVERSION, OR AFFLICTION: CHARACTERIZATIONS OF THE ADULT FEMALE ATHLETE IN CONTEMPORARY FICTION

Young female athletes are generally realistically portrayed and they usually have successful, happy endings to their stories, as discussed in Chapter 7. In contrast, the adult fictional female athlete, in contemporary novels, is still victimized by negative consequences for her interest in sport. These modern day female characters continue to be portrayed in the fictional patterns observed in the characterizations of athletic women prior to 1958. That is, sport involvement seems to lead to unhappy consequences, categorized earlier in the study as: diversion, perversion, or affliction.

Though it has been assumed that the opportunities for sport participation for females have increased and that there is now considerable public support for physical activities for women, there remains in the fiction of the sixties and the seventies, the same pattern of treatment for the woman in sport as was seen in the literature of the thirties, forties, and fifties. In contemporary novels, one can still find social forces

acting on females to change their sport inclinations, and we still find the female often assigned to ancillary sport roles (i.e., spectator or cheerleader), and perhaps most unsettling we find adult female athletes portrayed as abnormal beings. The female athlete's fate in fiction still involves the limited roles of being characterized as a silly, unthinking person, or being characterized as one whose sexual inclinations are dubious, or being a character headed for adverse consequences.

Following the procedures outlined in the methods chapter, 123 adult novels were reviewed. Thirty-three fictional female athletes were located. The operational definition of the term female athlete was: any female in fictional literature who engages in physical activities under competitive conditions, either against herself or others, for the enjoyment of sport, the improvement of physical skills, and/or the improvement of endurance and strength. The majority of fictional females, found in the books reviewed, who were active, were active in a recreational sense. These women camped, rode horses, swam, played tennis, and climbed mountains, but they did not participate on a highly competitive level, nor did they participate in a regular and scheduled way. They were active recreationally most often at or for the convenience of "their" men. The recreationally active woman is not the focus of this study, though her

fictional treatment will be briefly discussed as it is a pattern congruent with the characterization of the fictional adult female athlete.

John Berger in his perceptive book, Ways of Seeing, says, "To be born a woman has been to be born, within an allotted and confined space, into the keeping of men."[1] Though this statement was made in his discussion of the nude in European oil paintings, it has validity when we consider the fictional female character. Berger extends his argument by saying that a woman's social presence is different from a man's. The man's social presence is based on his perceived power and a woman's is based on how she appears or is viewed. In fictional works, the woman often chooses her activity, how she does it, when she does it, and why she does it because of the improved way she believes men will then perceive her. Women visualize themselves being scrutinized by men and then they often vary their actions and activities in accordance with how they believe men would like to see them.

Physical activity can be viewed as an asset to a woman's charm, especially when it enhances her attractiveness or improves the way she appears to others. When we look at the female characterizations in Mary McCarthy's novel, The Group, it is evident that physical activity is acceptable, even desirable. A descriptive paragraph of one character follows:

> Helena (as her mother said) could play the violin, the piano, the flute, and the trumpet . . . . She played a good game of tennis, golfed, skied, and figure-skated, she rode, though she had never jumped or hunted.[2]

However, the physical training seems to be more advantageous in the larger game of life, rather than for Helena's own enjoyment. Helena is being groomed to attract males. The active women in fiction must select her recreation with care. Her choice should reflect the needs and interests of the men in her life or the men she would hope to entice. Consider this example:

> Jean had never taken to hard rock climbing. Mountain faces were more attractive to her at a distance than when she found herself on them. She had persevered due to her wish to get close to Martin . . . .[3]

Usually physically active women are characterized as having an even more blatant use for their sport.

> Mary still played squash at the club. Her mother said it was good for her figure. She was fast and skilled and had no trouble finding partners among the men. The squash players had made a pet of Mary. In her short skirt and lacy panties she made a disturbing figure. Mary flirted with the men she partnered.[4]

Mary is a character from Hugh Atkinson's novel, The Games, which is concerned with a multitude of events surrounding a fictional Olympic games festival. She is the most athletic of all the women characterized.

Sarah comes from Edwin Fadiman's book, The Professional. It is about the life of a tennis player, but Sarah is playing another game.

> His first thought was, she's good--she's very good. . . . Her backhand lifted her small breasts to the sun, her thighs worked under her tennis skirt. She was adorable, she was grace in flight. . . . He was aware, after some twenty minutes of play, that under his shorts he had an erection. . . . She wasn't playing tennis at all, she was playing sex.[5]

In another novel, The Girl in the Green Valley, we discover Stella, a young lady who never leaves the beginner slope.

> "Stella," her father began dryly, "is an addict of the nursery slopes. She ought to have been done with them long ago, trying the higher pistes. But she is, it seems a slow learner."
> "I'm not a slow learner," Stella flung at her parent indignantly. "But it's no use rushing things. The fundamentals of skiing are all-important, Rudi says."
> "I'm sure he does!" Mark agreed sardonically.[6]

The attraction is catching Rudi, not mastering skiing skills.

The cover of Come Winter epitomizes another female's attractive power, which she uses to her advantage to ensnare two males (Figure 7). An active, excellent recreational skier, Sandy can attract and maintain two lovers. Her beauty and power are enhanced, in the eyes of her lovers, by her excellent physical prowess.

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Figure 7. Sandy

Source: Evan Hunter, Come Winter (London: Constable, 1973), cover.

Modern fiction is replete with these female types. Denise plays tennis to draw the attention of the pro instructor in Death of a Low Handicap Man.[7] Minda, in The First Season,[8] keeps skiing till she gets the town's best downhill racer to sleep with her, and Helen, though fighting the urge, skis into a romance that sets off a chain of events that end in her death, in Garden Without Flowers.[9]

An involvement in physical activity and the mastery of physical skills are usually associated with added attractiveness for the heroine. This physical vitality seems to be viewed, in most cases, as an addition to the skills a woman should learn to enhance her opportunities for mate selection. However, the encouragement given a woman's recreational activities is proportional to the degree and reasons for which she is active. Novels seem to imply that being physically active is an excellent quality if it helps lead or assist a woman to get a man. The adult female character who becomes involved in an activity for intrinsic satisfaction is rare, and when it does occur it is usually a negative depiction.

Thirty-three athletic females is a very small number, when one considers the thousands of possible fictional characters that could be created for the multitude of novels that are written and published each year. It is an inevitable conclusion that the mature

female athlete is not a prevalent character in adult fiction. There are a number of dissertations which convincingly argue that the sporting experience, both individual and team, has provided writers with rich subject matter and excellent character studies. However, this apparently applies only to male fictional protagonists, for there is a dearth of fictional female athletes.

The female athlete is a reality, yet her fictional characterization is not only limited, when it does appear it is repressive. It could be induced that not only are females not to be a part of the sports world, but they are to be discouraged from it. Repeatedly, adverse and perverse experiences are their fictional lot.

The demographic data of these thirty-three fictional female athletes appears rather innocuous (Appendix F: Summary of Information on Fictional Adult Female Athletes). It is, in the author's judgment, nor particularly informative to use fiction for the collection and classification of numerical facts. Fiction can better help us understand the slow and subtle changes, or lack of changes, in attitudes. Novels are detached from life and yet a re-creation of reality. The characters and story are not exact reproductions of life, they are attempts to resynthesize the essential experiences of living. Social attitudes can easily be recognized in fiction. However, from the general information sheet

used in this study a descriptive outline of the female athlete can be drawn. Literary data collected and summarized from the general information sheets parallels the data collected from sociological studies on women in sport. This should provide stimulus for thought.

Possibly the tools we use in collecting data shape the information we get. Case histories used on fictional characters or on real subjects may elicit the same outline of data. One handicap in sociological studies may be that the measurement instrument is too powerful to let the facts be revealed. Despite the aforementioned limitations of this method of data collection it does closely approximate the sociological data.

The fictional woman in sport is most often young, single and Caucasian. She is described as attractive, usually having an ectomorphic body type and usually having long blond hair. Most often she was introduced to her activity by her father and likes her sport for the pleasure of skill mastery. Most of the fictional female athletes have a strong commitment to continue in their activity. The authors' activity selections for their female characters are varied: ice skating, dancing, baseball, basketball, karate, cross-country skiing, cycling, bull fighting, hockey, downhill skiing, sprinting, water-skiing, mountain climbing and tennis, with the latter two being the more common activities. Most of these characters are described as happy, popular, and

able to get along with others. They generally get support from their family and close friends. This type of literary data reflects only pieces of information.

Literary evidence for attitude "climate" has a much bigger impact. Though all the pieces of information seem generally realistic and even positive, the fictional female athlete still ends up with a negative balance sheet. She is surrounded by adverse and perverse happenings. It is through literature that one can see conflicts between internal images and external situations. The potential opportunities for women represent an external situation that may threaten internal images of what should be. Is it possible that authors may subconsciously attempt to minimize this conflict by offering negative experiences for the female character portrayed in roles which are not in harmony with the author's social and internal construction of reality? Can an author's direct creative selections help to reinforce, explain, and support more conservative and standard role options for men and women? For the majority of female athletes discovered in fiction humor, adversity, and their sexual identity were given precedence over their sport involvement. The female athlete as a sex object was the most common form of treatment.

Cocoa Blades is a novel that highlights the sexual potential of the female athlete.[10] It is a story of a

young black girl, who rises to stardom as a figure skater. Barbara, whose professional name is Cocoa Blades, is an admirable, but perplexing character (Figure 8). Her activity selection is her own, decided upon after a day in the city park, sliding and dancing on the ice of the lake. She struggles with her mother's resistance, lack of equipment, and no coaching. Through her personal perseverance she becomes a phenomenally skilled skater. When Barbara first starts out, she wants skates so badly she barters away her virginity for her first pair of skates. She is a hard-working, dynamic skater, driven, according to her fictional conversation and monologues, to be best. However, in the closing chapter of the novel, she gives up her career, her training, and her skating to be the mistress of an eccentric millionaire.

Her beauty and skill as a skater are lightly dealt with, but her sensuality and sexuality are full blown. One of her performances is described in the following quote:

> The spotlight flashed on to show a crouched, naked black girl whose body swayed to the music. With the languor of some slowly uncurling cat, the girl tilted fingers, arms, and shoulders, face, nipples, and thighs to the imploring bass. She began to dance. She was on skates, but black ones with carboned blades, so that she seemed not skating on ice but dancing magically a few inches above a bluish-white floor. Her skin began to shine, and the changed slope of the spotlight shadowed her navel, then the dark crotch, and passing over

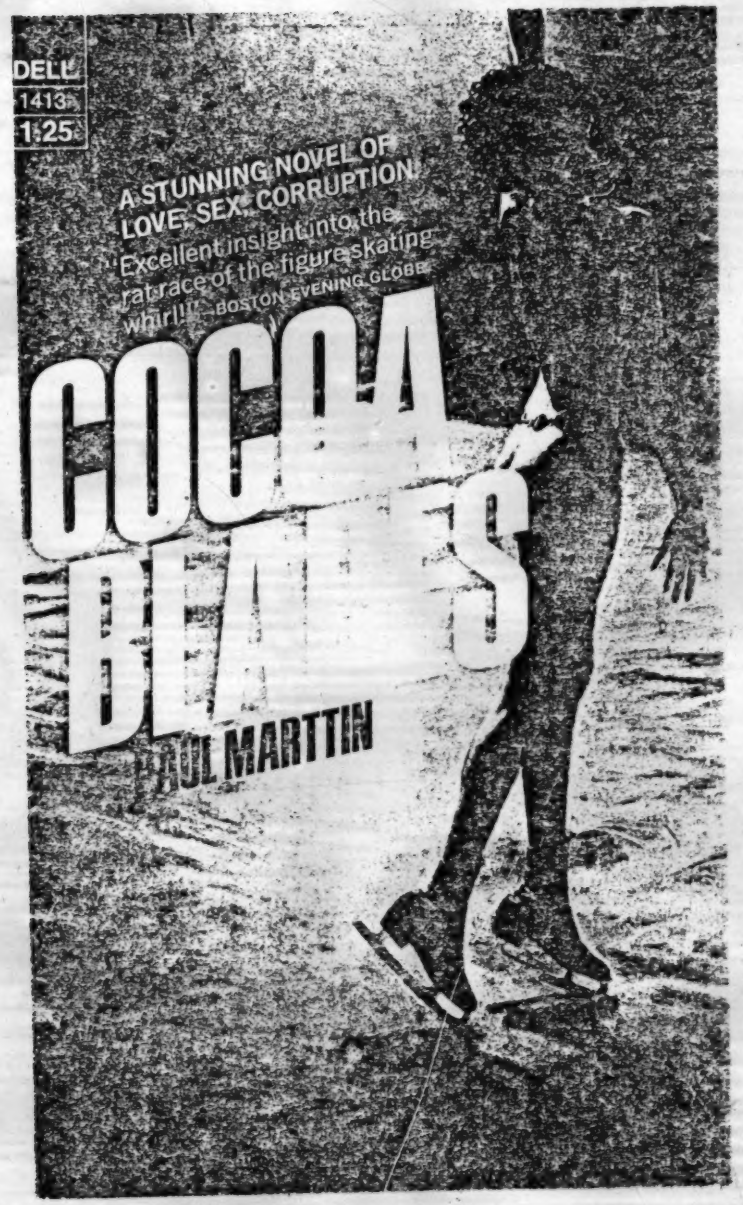


Figure 8. Cocoa Blades

Source: Paul Marttin, Cocoa Blades (New York: W. H. Allen, 1972), cover.

> her, furrowed the hollows of her shoulders and made a resting place of the triangle between her scapulae. But the eye dwelt not on the dark places, because the altotuned bass urged her to dance on, and with long glides she danced along the ice, slowly gaining speed.
>
> The noise from the men rose with her, and in the minute and twenty seconds it took her to skate the entire length of the ice, bass and voices accompanied her. The bass stopped abruptly and plucked a single string. She jerked her body, pushed ahead, was jerked by the same throbbing note, lengthened her stride, and as the insistent single note accelerated, so did she, legs opening slightly, speed rising, arms clasped up over her head. Now dancing in huge open swoops, arms thrust apart, tongue to lips, mouth opening, circling the rink and starting up the right side of the ice, Cocoa Blades, open and glistening, started to shout, raced to the protruding music that demanded more and more and more--and with a rising yell and muscles tensed against the oiled brown skin, she sped past the standing crowd and went sobbing and shouting into the small dark opening at the end of the rink.[11]

Esmerald Fabada is another strong-willed, goal-oriented fictional female athlete. Her portrayal is also somewhat mystifying. Esmerald is a major character in the book, Toro! Toro! Toro![12] This young woman wants to be a bull fighter. Night after night she creeps out to the fields of a bull ranch where she practices her passes and runs. It is hard, exhausting, dangerous work, especially in the dark.

Esmerald, like the figure skater Barbara, finds equipment essential and like Barbara sells her body to obtain zapatillas (special, soft shoes), which she needs for work in the ring. Esmerald perseveres and becomes a skilled matador, good enough that audiences demand to see

her and acclaim her courage. Then after years of hard work, she throws away the dignity and reserve of her standing in a moment of public abandonment. In an amazing match with an electronic bull, a rhinoceros, and a male matador, named Paco Machismo, Esmerald is overcome with desire. Before thousands of spectators, one romping rhino, and one robot bull this scene emerges.

> As the cloud of white smoke lifted, a patch of scorched sand was revealed, along with what little remained to mark the fight of the century: a stray hoof, assorted cogs, oddments of raw meat. Not far from the carnage, Paco Machismo and la Fabalita remained locked in each other's arms. Neither the robust entrance of the robot nor the subsequent holocaust had disturbed their embrace. Fabalita was reaching into Paco's gold-embroidered trousers when the men with the stretchers came running up. The photographers were close behind. Life was never the same again for either of them.[13]

So potent is the sexual nature of the fictional female athlete, that her athletic skills are debased. Though often portrayed as high level athletes, fictional women in sport have a minimum of attention given to their sport proficiency. The enticing potential of their sexual skills has the major emphasis.

Mary Tate Farnsworth is a water skiing champion. It was, she says, the only way to get out of Alabama. Mary Tate is a fictional character in the book, Stay Hungry, by Charles Gaines.[14] Mary is the best water skier in her state and good enough to perform at Cypress Gardens. Yet her skiing skills are described in only one scene.

> The course was in a quiet piney cove about three miles from Mr. Santo's beach. It was made up of ten floating Clorox bottles anchored thirty yards from each other in a wavy line and arranged so that a skier being towed through them, with quick perfect turns, could round the outside of all the bottles. On the first run Santo drove slowly looking for logs and Mary Tate made all the turns easily. As they circled back she signaled Santo to shorten the rope. On the shorter rope she had to kick the tail of her ski faster around the bottle, and had to lean out closer to the water to make the ski's edge bite high--but she made all the buoys again. Craig, watching her quick, spare motions, was awed by the strength and concentration they required.
>
> As soon as she had passed the last bottle Mary Tate signaled that she wanted the rope even shorter and Santo pulled another hitch in it. On her third run she missed two buoys. On the next one she missed four and as Santo circled for another try they could see her cursing behind a screen of spray.
>
> But the next time she was perfect. By stretching her arms back toward the boat and heaving forward just before the bottles, she made them all. Santo whooped, and yelled over his shoulder to Craig and Dorothy that it was the best slalom he'd ever seen her make, that it was inspired, that America was built on slalom runs like that. He made an O with his fingers and shook it back at her and Mary Tate grinned and waved to him to take her through again.[15]

Much more often Mary's other physical abilities are extolled. Mary's schedule of sex is so rigorous it weakens her partner. Zoe Mason, another briefly mentioned female athlete in this book, has similar character ascriptions. Zoe is six feet two, and has a monumental body, a stunning rightness of parts, and the female records for deep sea fishing catches in every line class. No descriptions or scenes are given to Zoe's fishing

techniques; in the book she trolls only for men. The novel also hints at the amazing sexual gymnastics of women weight lifters.

> ". . . boy, you wouldn't believe some of those women." She turned from the vanity to face him, her high breasts bobbing. As was his habit he forced his eyes to her face.
>
> "Wouldn't believe what?"
>
> "Well, just for instance, you know that leg-press machine? You know that shiny pole the weight goes on?" Craig knew. There was one like it in the men's section--plates of weight with holes in the center were slipped down on a two-foot, chromium rod that had about the same diameter as a banana. "Some of 'em use that to, well, they sit on it and screw themselves."[16]

Sexual titillation is the most common function assigned to the fictional female athlete. This may be agreeably exciting to some; however, I would suggest that it is an assigned character trait that is derogatory and disparaging to female athletes when used so often, as if implying a connection between athletic prowess and sexual prowess. In fact, the fascination of sex appears to be heightened in fiction with the presence of a woman in sport, as if ability in sport promises outstanding ability in intercourse.

Gaye Nell Odell in Karate Is a Thing of the Spirit typifies this lasciviousness,[17] and so does Gunner in Racers to the Sun.[18] They seem to offer bodies so perfect that the promise of a good "lay" makes them irresistible to the men of each story.

Gaye Nell is the best woman karate practitioner in the nation (Figure 9). In the first chapter, she is not training or working out, but she is serving as a sexual decoy to test the male karate students' powers of concentration. Gaye with her slender, well-made body, long legs and sharply defined athletic calves walks down the beach, in front of nine male students.

> She took one step forward and removed the yellow top of her bikini. Her breasts burst free in the sun. The nipples--the color of brown sugar--trembled. They stood at right angles to her rippling rib cage. Not an eye moved. She turned and went knee-deep into the waveless ocean, bent and dipped salt water high over her shoulders. The water converged between her high easy breasts and ran down the indentation of her muscled belly and finally into the yellow triangular bikini bottom. In a single slipping graceful movement she got out of the bikini pants and was naked. The hair at the base of her belly was high and curling and blond.
>
> She walked up on the sand and dropped the bikini pants with the top just behind the master. He sat as before, his hands thicker, more swollen now. She did not look at him. She moved slowly before the students. The drops of salt water caught and held the sun where they hung on her skin.
>
> She was just turning at the end of the line when she saw the movement. It was hardly movement at all; the quickest flutter of an eyelid, the marginal sliding of a blue eye in her direction, the blue desperate focus on her swelling nipples.[19]

Even after years of disciplined work and hour upon hour of brutal training, Gaye's quintessence is the epicurean promise of her body, not her karate skill. The

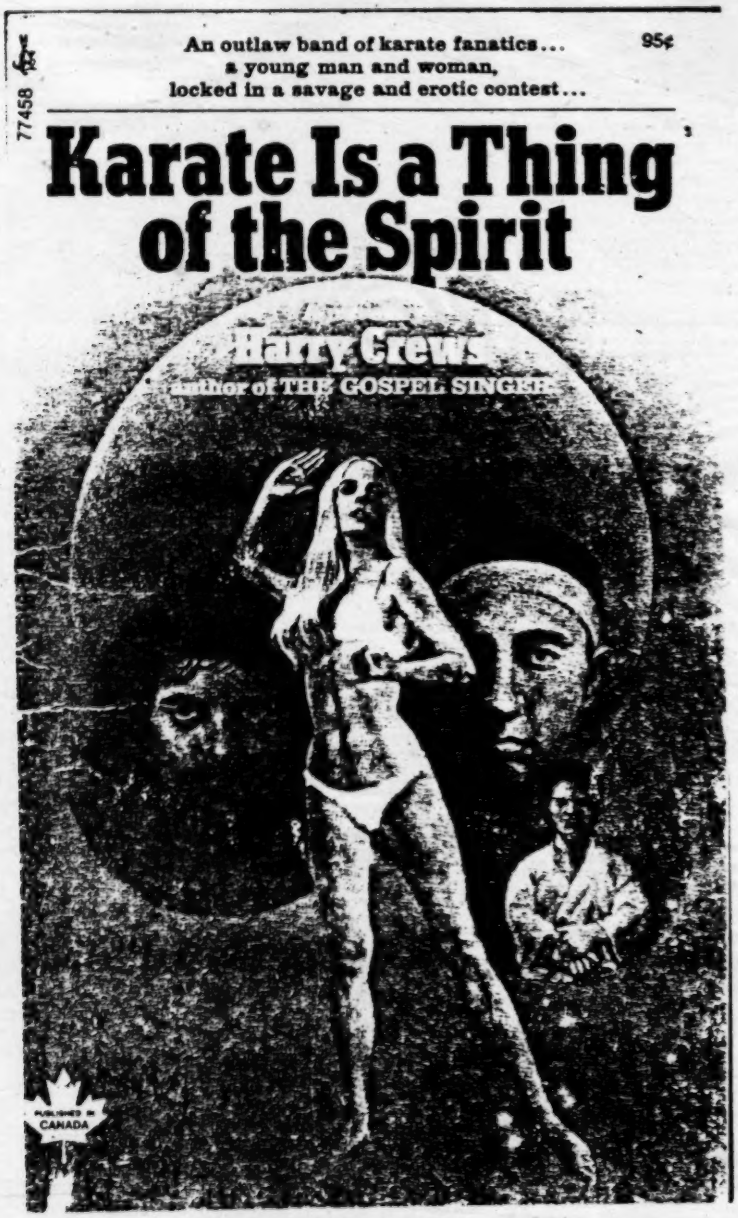

An outlaw band of karate fanatics...
a young man and woman,
locked in a savage and erotic contest...
95¢
77458
Karate Is a Thing of the Spirit
Harry Crews
author of THE GOSPEL SINGER
PUBLISHED IN CANADA

Figure 9. Gaye Nell

Source: Harry Crews, Karate Is a Thing of the Spirit (Ontario: Pocket Book, 1972), cover.

promise is forthcoming as the book's hero is treated to the most satisfying sex he has ever experienced.

Gunner, in James Hall's Racers to the Sun, is also a literary device for sexual provocation. She is a superb motorcyclist, having trained and practiced since childhood with her father as her coach. Once again it is not her racing skills that are described. Gunner's sensuality makes her a winner. Paul Willis' comment, in his article "Women in Sport," is a succinct summary of this literary treatment of the female athlete. Sexual identity is clearly given precedence over a female athlete's sport identity, in the world of fiction. A woman as a sexual diversion gets much more attention than a woman's athletic skills.

Athletic women are also characterized as humorous, silly, unthinking people. They become a laughable distraction, a funny diversion. In the two books that deal with groups of female athletes, this literary technique was used.

Miss Pym Disposes, by Josephine Tey, is a novel, whose setting is a school for the training of women physical education instructors. In the plot, murder is committed and the story line involves the discovery and exposure of the killer. The young female students and their instructors are often spoken of in a deprecating manner. The description of Miss Wragg, a teacher at the school, was given in Chapter 1; she is characterized as

not having an idea in her head.[20] The book is also laced with derogatory implications about the students' intellect.

> . . . she had not expected intellectual appreciation from young women who presumably spent their days doing things with their muscles. Only a few, of course, had asked questions; so there was still a chance that the rest were morons.[21]

> "They [the students] are as the beasts that perish," said Miss Lux incisively. "They think that Botticelli is a variety of spaghetti."[22]

As the story develops the characterizations become more insidious. It is implied that these women have worked and trained so hard and the competition for jobs is so keen, they are no longer "normal." In this novel, murder becomes a feasible way to get rid of someone competing for the joy one wants.

The athletic woman is not only depicted as shallow, she is seen as being foolish. Charles Drummond creates a whole team of clowns in his book, Death and the Leaping Ladies. His female basketball players win all but one competition on their tour. Occasional references are made to their various basketball skills, but most descriptions are ludicrous and incongruous jokes that focus on the girls' physical endowments.

When Irene misses a pass, this exchange occurs:

> "You missed the ball last night," says her coach.

> "Architectural reasons," chuckles Mr. Fred, the team's beautician, "the ball goes out of sight."[23]

Without too much hard thought, the reader can remember that Irene has a bustline that is "spectacular." These players must not only be talented, they must also be attractive. Their manager says, "I wanted beauties, the kind of girls old gentlemen love to watch, bouncing around in shorts, in the interest of sport."[24]

The girls are involved in intricate strategies, which seldom depend on their game skills.

> We've got a routine . . . . Sometimes Em wears trick knickers. She makes a hell of a jump and they fall down--oh, she wears a black bikini underneath and all the girls rush around to shield her. The louts in the bleachers whistle like maddened stallions and God knows what it does to the old gents down front.[25]

Diversion, perversion or affliction; these are the three most common fictional ways of developing the female athlete. If she is a character too strong willed and intelligent to be a sexual or humorous diversion, the characterization implies that her sexual nature is perverted. Lesbian affairs are commonly ascribed to female athletes in novels. Any female who has worked with other female athletes or taught physical education in the public schools or universities would not find this a surprising association. It is a commonly heard rumor, that women in physical education and athletics are

homosexuals. What is difficult to handle is the investigation of the reality of this often implied relationship. This is a tale that has not been seriously investigated. It would seem that sociologists looking into sport phenomena would have investigated such a topical issue. The lack of discussion or debate or research on the subject makes one wonder if there is a desire to keep it a socially sanctioned myth, to be bandied about when defamatory statements are needed to undermine the position of another or if it is not investigated because it is feared that there may be some correlation between the predilection for physical activities and homosexual encounters. In either case the lack of data makes it difficult to measure the reality of the fictional portrayals.

In our society some do not classify homosexual relationships as perversions. For many it is not a corruption or misuse of the usual male-female relationship, but a perfectly acceptable alternative. I have included it under this subheading for I feel it is the author's intention to present the homosexual act as unnatural and as a deviation from the normal.

Most portrayals of lesbian athletes in novels assume the relationship without fictional speculation as to why or how it occurred. A writer's conjectural hypothesis as to why and how these relationships develop would be interesting, for investigations are so limited it is not

known if a homosexual "personality" selects sport or if sport provides the environment for this type of encounter.

Betsy is a character in The Pleasure Garden, by Oakley Hall. She is an avid skier, working as a waitress at a ski resort so that she can pursue her activity every day of the winter season. She is a gifted athlete, having been a first baseman for three years on an undefeated girls' softball team and a fair surfer. Betsy's lover is Donna. The only explanation for this liaison is that Betsy finds Donna clean, unlike dirty, smelly men.

> . . . she was clean and fresh as a snake out of its old skin, soft and sweet smelling as a baby, so that being with Donna then was like being with your own mother and with your baby at the same time . . . .[26]

Another Betsy is found in the book, The Front Runner, by Patricia Nell Warren.

> One of the most startling newcomers to the forum was a little half-miler from the girls' team, Betsy Henden. She was about five foot two, with short, wavy hair and big astonished long-lashed eyes a la Bette Midler, and she was the only militant lesbian on campus.[27]

If Betsy is truly devoted to the lesbian cause, the story offers a most perverse ending for her. Difficult to believe as it is, Betsy becomes a wife and a mother. The male athlete-hero of the story, Billy, is shot and killed. Betsy volunteers her body for artificial insemination,

has Billy's baby and takes up the pseudo-wifely role with Billy's homosexual lover, Harlan.

Evelyn Barker is a top class tennis player in the book, Double Fault, by Lawrence Meynell.

> The dark one is Evelyn Barker. She'll be the best player here most likely. Obviously she won't win Wimbledon, but she could get into the last sixteen, even possibly the last eight . . . .[28]

Evelyn's life is a tragedy, as she loses one female lover after another. Her emotional and public outbursts on these occasions leave her no dignity or self respect.

A more despairing picture is that of Jojo Barton in the novel, Miss Bannister's Girls.

> Until the time she was twelve years old, Jojo Barton had no peer at Miss Bannister's. Popularity and prestige were dependent on how good you were at sports, and Jojo all but qualified for the Olympics.[29]

Her athletic ability in all sports was superior, but her relationships with men were all failures. Jojo did not seem to be able to follow the social prerequisites for male-female relationships.

> Jojo was paired with a muscle man named Billy Leffingwell. He and Jojo were completely hors de combat. They were out on the tennis court at dawn and returned every night just in time for dinner. Though Billy was on the second tennis team at Princeton his scores reflected his failing strength--the sets went to Jojo by an ever greater margin: 12-10, 8-6, 6-3, 6-1. Jojo was constitutionally incapable of understanding about letting the man win.[30]

Though her school days reflect happy times, being voted best all-around girl in the entire school and a solid page of type was needed to list her athletic achievements in the yearbook, Jojo's adult years find her overweight, alcoholic, and paired with a sadistic female lover named Minx, who liked to destroy things.

A different kind of sexual abnormality is developed in the book, Golden Girl, by Peter Lear (Figure 10). Here the female athlete becomes a manufactured monster. Her body is completely resculptured by plastic surgery, her training methods are questionable, and the manipulations of her sexual responses are perverted. The author has clearly studied his topic well, so the reader is enveloped in what seem to be plausible circumstances. The female athlete is epitomized, as the book cover states, as a manipulated robot, bred from Nazi stud-farm stock, and trained with very inhuman methods. A journalistic question and answer session becomes her path to orgasm. Some might offer this as a successful role model character, for Golden Girl wins her three gold medals, yet the de-humanization of this female athlete seems more to be a virulent form of character perversion rather than positive role modeling.

Realistic characterizations most often elude the female athlete in fiction. Their portrayal is connected with sex and their attractiveness to men. The non-sexual aspects of the female athlete's life are not a reality,

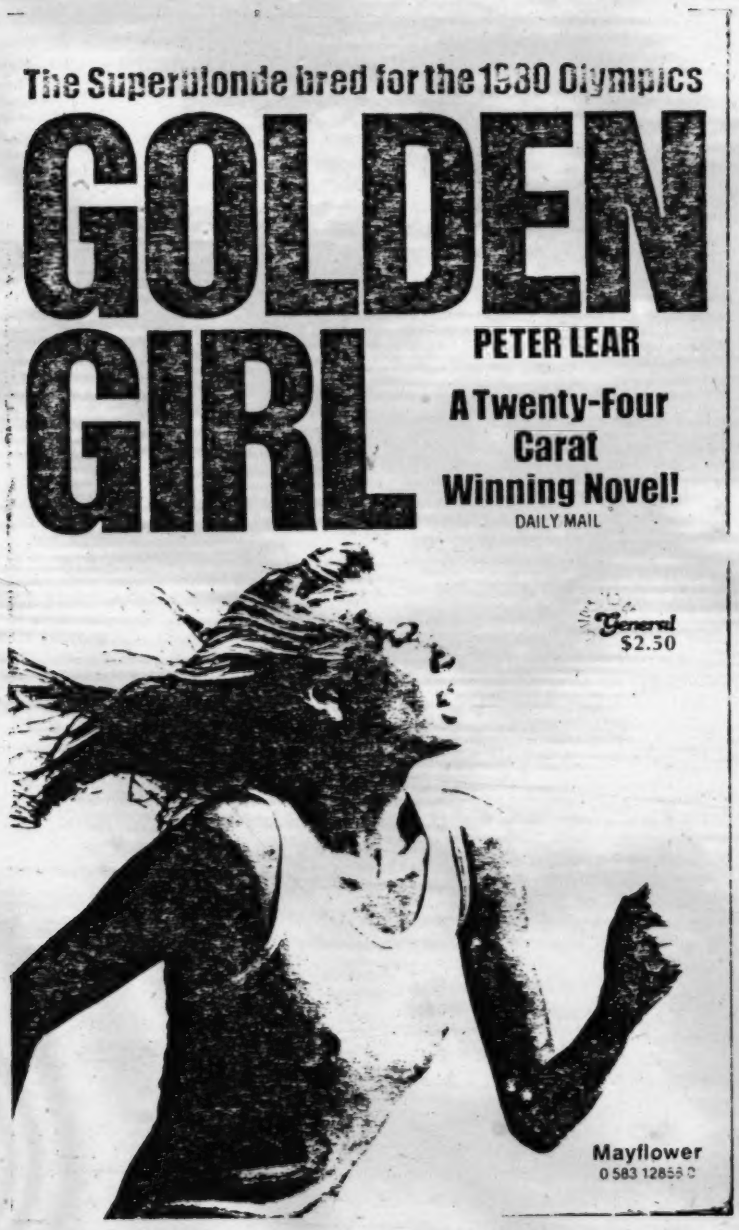


Figure 10. Golden Girl

Source: Peter Lear, Golden Girl (London: Granada, 1978), cover.

they are never explored. Golden Girl's schedule is revealed but only in relation to the men who train her and who are investing in her. This unbalanced treatment continually produces what can be classified as a beautiful toy who will be entertaining or sexually titillating but never realistic. The final barrier against empathetic identification is adversity. The persistent, goal-directed female athlete is not often happy or successful.

The experience of suffering is a common one for the adult fictional female athlete. She seems a character consistently besieged. The more obvious forms of adversity are easy to document.

George Hotfort is a female mountain climber in The Eiger Sanction. She has been trained by her father since childhood and is skilled enough to lead experts as they condition for expeditions. She is also assigned to sexual expeditions, and the hero of the story calls her his sexual aspirin. Like many of the other female athletes mentioned in novels, her superior physical skills in mountain climbing seem to be associated with heightened sexual powers.

> She would send a man to a sanatorium in a fortnight, if he let her. She climaxed quickly and often, but was never satisfied. Sex for her was not a gentle sequence of objectives and achievements; it was an unending chase from one exploding bubble of thrill to the next--a plateau of sensation to be maintained, not a

> series of crests to be climbed. And if the partner seemed to flag, she introduced a variation calculated to renew his interest and vigor.[31]

George is not only a sexual diversion, but a potential murderer. As the story develops it is discovered that she has made plans and attempts to kill her lover. Once addicted to drugs, she agrees to murder to assure her secret will be safe.

Kate is another expert mountain climber, in Wolf Mountain. Her exploits include sexual assault and other adverse occurrences. Her sexual encounter is particularly brutal.[32] She and the climbing team she is training are trapped in a mountain cabin by two escaped convicts. In order to placate them she must perform fellatio on one while the youngest female on her team is raped and assaulted by the other convict. The rest of the book follows their attempts to escape and the horror of this ordeal.

Drug addiction, sexual assault, murder and death are all assigned as endings for fictional female athletes, while suicide is the prescribed ending for Joan Gilling. Joan is a college hockey champion, in Sylvia Plath's Bell Jar.[33] She hangs herself from a tree, unable to adjust to life.

There is another more subtle adversity often associated with athletic women. Mary Allen comments in The Necessary Blankness: Women in Major American Fiction of

the Sixties that most fictional females direct all their energy to snaring a man. A woman's worth is often measured by her success in doing this. The greatest stress is on a woman's sexuality and her ability to get the desired effect. The proverbial happy ending for most fictional women characters is the "capture" of a man and marriage. It is interesting to evaluate this aspect and how it relates to the fictional woman in sports. Physical activity may be a method of attraction, but it may not dominate a woman's focus.

If a woman, in a novel, decides to be fully committed to a sport she most often loses her man. If a fictional female is willing to give up her sport she is treated to a happy ending; that is, she gets a man. The withholding of the usual reward, a man, is the most frequent adversity imposed on the devoted female athlete (Appendix G: "Who Gets What and Who Gets Whom"). The intrinsic value of sport has little fictional worth, when compared with the extrinsic value of becoming attached to a man.

Katja Milenkaya is a prima ballerina of world renown, but rejects it all when she is threatened with the loss of her husband.

> I've wasted such a lot of brains and marrow and energy on such a lot of unimportant stuff and I've been a goddamned failure where it counts: as a mother, as a wife, as a woman.[34]

Rody Bliss is Katja's antithesis. A world class skier, she continues to ski and loses her husband, her lover, and in her drive to excel almost kills her son.

> A second to the best woman racer in the world in the Hahnenkamm was something, wasn't it? It was the best race Rody had ever run, but after that nothing had gone right for her . . . .[35]

Just as Willa, an excellent basketball player in Jay Neugeboren's Big Man, loses Mack her lover,[36] just as Dallas, a tennis player who pushes on to win at Wimbledon, loses her man in World Class,[37] the choices are: give up sport as a primary interest and keep your man, or lose your man and keep your ardent interest in athletics. The book, Mixed Singles, typifies these extremes. Frances Bigelow takes up tennis and grows to love it. She also loses her husband to Lily, a once top college player who gave up tennis for more feminine pursuits.

The last tennis game in this book might be the symbolic battle of this social rewards system, the intrinsic pleasure of athletic achievement versus the extrinsic rewards of a male's attention. Frances, once housewife turned tennis player, is in a doubles match against her husband and Lily. Lily, though an excellent tennis player, resorts to a sexual "come on" to unnerve Frances' partner. The match ends with Jack giving the game to his wife.

> It could have been the sight of his wife, the woman he had been married to for almost a quarter century. Tennis had not only distorted her thinking, it had distorted her features. She was drenched with sweat. She was breathing through her mouth. Her lipstick was smeared and her eye makeup was running. Her eyes looked bruised and hollow.[38]

Much like the admonishment, one cannot have cake and eat it too, a woman can rarely be devoted to physical activity and have a fulfilling permanent relationship with a man.

Occasionally this circle is broken and a female gets both her man and her game. Barbara Headly wins the grand slam in tennis and still keeps the attentions of her lover Nicky, in a book titled Grand Slam, by Derek Lambert.[39] One other fictional female athlete, Vanya, a mountain climber in The Ascent of D13, by Andrew Garvie, subdues both the mountain and her lover.[40] Most often though, through afflictions, perversions, and diversions, the fictional female athlete comes out the loser. Jill is one other example of a fictional female athlete who loses. She loses both sport involvement and husband.

Jill is a 100-meter sprinter and a good one. She is a major female character in The Olympian by Brian Glanville. Her characterization is both true to form and yet an exception in that neither sport nor mate are awarded to her. Physically, she is described as having a pretty face and lovely little figure. Jill, also, escapes the usual characterization of a female athlete as

being a sexual temptress. Jill is "different" from the other girls, "when they [the other females on Britain's Olympic track team] did go to bed with you, it was all a bit of a joke, run of the mill, like having a drink or going to the pictures."[41] Jill accompanies the hero of the story and her lover on his training workouts, though it would seem the training for a 100-meter sprinter ought to be entirely different from the training for a miler. Jill marries this man, supports him both emotionally and economically, and she changes jobs so he may train where he wants. Jill is good enough to be on Britain's Olympic track team, but we hear nothing about how she feels about her sport, her training or her abilities. We know nothing about her athletic hopes or fears and generally feel only pity for her as a character, for she loses so much and gets so little. The focus for Jill, and the majority of adult female athletes in novels, is clearly stated by Sam, the coach in this novel. "I know you can run. But to me, your femininity will always come first, your running second."[42] Sexual identity is always paramount. Only two adult female athletes were portrayed in a significantly different manner.

One exception to the usual mode is The Sensuous Southpaw, by Paul Rothweiler.[43] Its main character, Jeri "Red" Walker, is a female baseball player. Though she is

treated to her share of sexual emphasis and adverse circumstances, what is special and unique is that "Red" overcomes all (Figure 11).

Her dad was the best pitcher the National League ever had. In her first eighteen years of life, he trains her to be the best, also. Rothweiler has created a sensual, attractive, superior athlete, who gets to be a professional player, and have a happy ending.

The story's villains attempt to involve her as an actress in a pornographic film and they then attempt to get her dropped from the team on a morals charge. However, they lose and she wins. For once the consequences of physical activity are not negative. Red is an exciting character, for though her sexual identity is stressed, her sport identity is given precedence. She is one character who is more than a female, she is also an athlete.

The character, Willa, is another fictional female athlete who deserves more discussion. Though Willa loses her lover, Jay Neugeboren has given her the same strength of character seen in "Red's" portrayal. These women are athletes and further believe in themselves and what they are doing. In contrasting Mack, the hero of Neugeboren's book, with Willa, Willa comes out the stronger character. She is a glorious woman.

Willa is a big, ugly, black lady, a mother, and a basketball player. She is good enough to have tried out

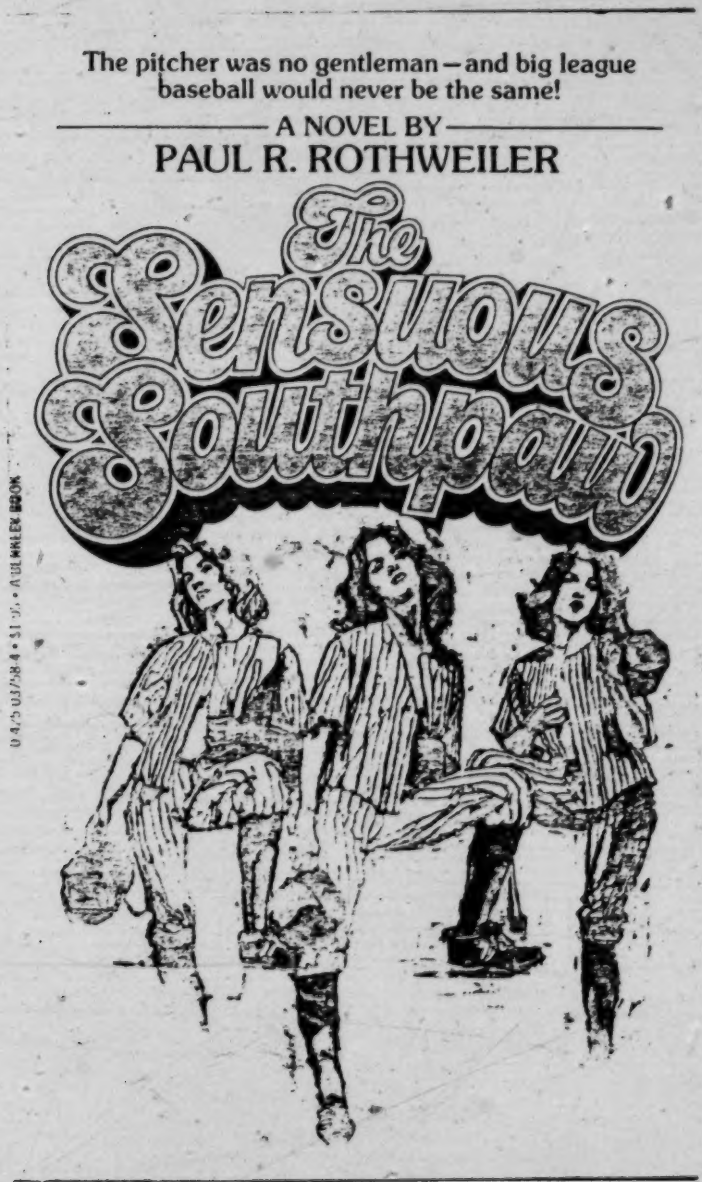

The pitcher was no gentleman—and big league baseball would never be the same!
A NOVEL BY
PAUL R. ROTHWEILER
The Sensuous Southpaw

Figure 11. Red

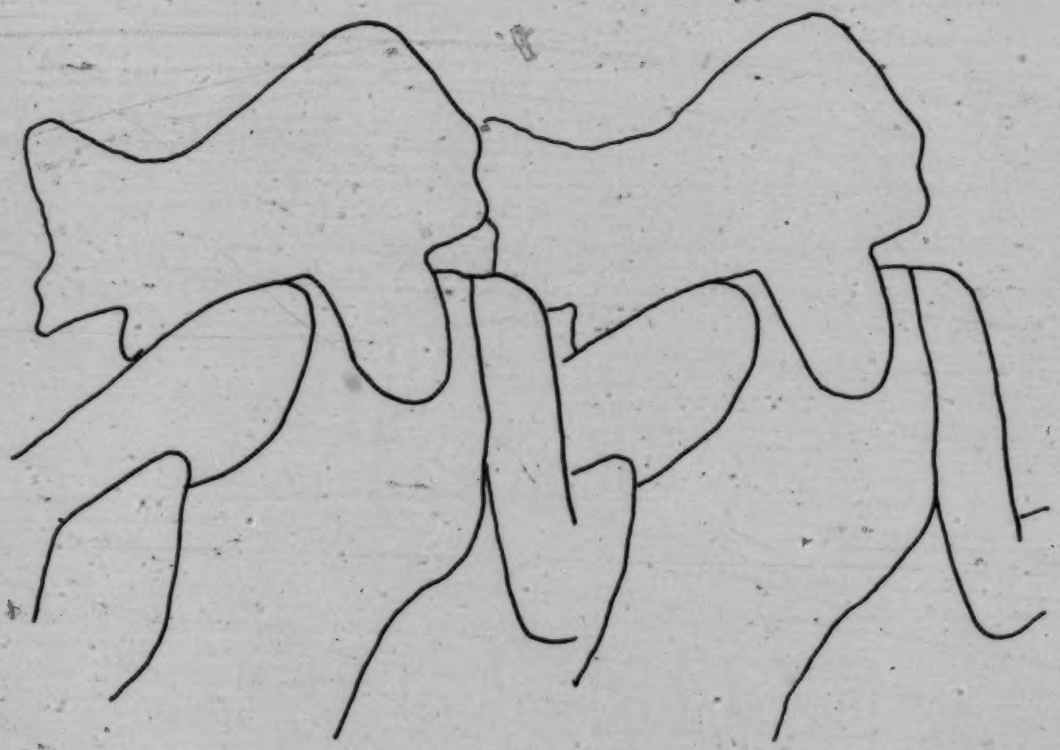
Source: Paul R. Rothweiler, The Sensuous Southpaw (New York: Putnam, 1976), cover.

for the women's Olympic basketball team. The only tragedy concerning Willa's portrayal is what she does to be allowed to play basketball. In order to play on the car-wash team of "Louie's Leapers" she cuts her hair, wears a mustache, and ties her breasts down, so as to appear male. It would seem after these ludicrous actions, the author is laughing at this female athlete. However, Neugeboren creates Willa with such strength and dignity, a rare and special portrait emerges. Willa believes in herself!

> "Me--I did it! Gonna be the new backcourt star with 'Louie's Leapers'! Just watch my style, man!" Then she grabs the ball from Ronnie and dribbles all the way to the far basket, lays it up nice and easy through the hoop. You didn't know, you'd think she was a guy, she is so natural. She grabs the rebound, her back to the basket, and pivots right, hooks that ball in bang! off the backboard.[44]

How exciting it would be for female readers if more female characters could end up saying, "Me--I did it!"

The comparison of fictional and factual portrayals of adult female athletes has parallels. In both she is most often young, enjoys her activity and wants to continue in it. But literature leaves another impression and it is one that can not be measured against reality for social data is lacking (see Diagram 4). The mature, fictional female athlete committed to sport is most frequently surrounded by adverse happenings, humorous



Fact:	Fiction:
"The stigma is nearly erased. Sweating girls are becoming socially acceptable." (Source: "Women in Sport," Times, 26 June 1978, p. 42)	adversity highlighted sexual exploits lack of intelligence humorous characterizations

Diagram 4. The Adult Female Athlete in Fact and Fiction

descriptions, highlighted sexual exploits, and a lack of intelligence.

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Chapter 10

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND SPECULATIONS

Summary

McKenna has stated in her work on the image of women in Canadian literature, ". . . literature provides the rounded picture of the social psychological nature of a society."[1] Miles reinforces this idea, by stating in her book, The Fiction of Sex: Themes and Functions of Sex Differences in the Modern Novel, "The novel has been the primary agent of the moral imagination of society. Whatever is occurring in the cultural consciousness at large, can be found in the novel."[2] If one agrees with this line of reasoning then the findings of this study are provocative.

The objective of this study was to uncover additional information about the female athlete and society's response to her by investigating her image in popular, contemporary fiction. It was found that sociological data and fictional summaries were in general accord. Parallel fictional and factual image composites describe someone who is young, who is Caucasian, who is introduced to an activity through family support, and who most often

likes the sport for the pleasure of skill mastery. However, of more critical and crucial concern is the clearly reflected "negative attitude climate."

An examination of the character treatment, story line, and action options repeatedly assigned to adult fictional female athletes reveals a rather bleak picture. Typically, in adult fiction, female athletes are characterized in patterns of diversion, perversion or affliction. Few fictional adult women involved in sport activities have happy endings to their stories. They are surrounded by adverse happenings. Seven adult fictional female athletes kill themselves or others, five are homosexuals, four are assaulted or raped, seven are forced out of their sport involvement, thirteen lose the "love of their live," and almost all serve as repeatedly used sexual decoys.

The fictional female athlete ends up with a negative balance sheet. The deficiencies are even more apparent when one compares the characterizations of the fictional female athlete to the characterizations of the fictional male athlete. The comparison between the fictional male athletic hero and the female athletic heroine vividly illustrates the limited assignment given the fictional woman in sport. She barely exists and, with the exception of juvenile literature, no major contemporary writer of any serious vein uses her. The female sporting experience has not been subject matter for writers' plots

or character studies; there is a dearth of fictional female athletes. Though it is possible the research methods could have excluded books, it would seem that if the fictional woman in sport was more obvious the search methods would have touched some information that would have led to more literature about her. Bibliographies of sport stories and fictional male heroes are not impossible to find, but none exist for fictional female athletes.

"Sport in American Literature" by Christian Messenger and "Dreaming of Heroes: American Sports Fiction from the Beginning to the Present" by M. Oriard are two examples of dissertations written about sport and literature and the sport's hero in literature.[3] These dissertations note that sport and sports' heroes are common in the writings of North American authors. Oriard feels that novels dealing with sport are numerous enough to develop a sub-genre, as is the political novel, sea novel, or war novel thought of as sub-genres of literature.[4] Frank Norris, Jack London, Sherwood Anderson, Ring Lardner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Frank Harris, Ernest Hemingway, James T. Farrell, Sinclair Lewis, John Steinbeck, William Faulkner, Damon Runyon, Thomas Wolfe, Robert Penn Warren, Irwin Shaw, Bernard Malamud, Mark Harris, Budd Schulberg, Wright Morris, John Updike, Eugene O'Neill, Clifford Odets, Robert Sherwood, Arthur Miller, William Inge, and Tennessee Williams are authors

whose writings have repeatedly included sports themes, sporting contests, and athletes.[5] The athlete for all or most all of these authors is a male. If what N. Berman says is true, ". . . younger American novelists, writing about their experiences of America, haye found in sport both a dynamic metaphor for reality and reality itself,"[6] then the metaphor and the reality of the younger American writer is a world of activities for males. Or, as Umphlett expresses it, "The American writer in his quest to express psychological and moral meaning has recognized that the sporting world contains the essentials of the American Experience."[7] If sport is the American experience, then it is an experience that neglects females. While thirty of the books reviewed had some mention of an adult female athlete, only three had an adult female athlete as the most important character of the book. If the hero of sports novels reflects the status of the man in our society, what then is the status of the woman in our society? Leslie Fielder, in The Art of the Essay, says, "The sport hero is the idealized version of ourself."[8] Do women not have an idealized self?

Oriard summarizes the differences in fictional representation of male and female athletes: "Fiction recognizes an irreconcilable incompatibility between women and the game."[9] He states that in sports fiction women are ignored, or represented as deleterious intrusions, or used for comic purposes. Oriard's summary of

sports fiction characterizations has been supported by the findings of this study.

Implications

> This study is a pioneer venture. It uses American novels for their socio-psychological content rather than for their literary values, the underlying assumption being that literature is a sensitive medium which both creates and reflects attitudes of society.
>
> In forging its way through unexplored areas, the investigation met with . . . major difficulties.[10]

The above quote is from Dorothy Yost Deegan's study, The Stereotype of the Single Woman in American Novels. Her investigation was one of the earliest, by an American scholar, to attempt to apply sociology of literature theories to sociological data. Delineated in the foreword to her book, are the problems she encountered. Her statements strike a responsive chord in this author, for the difficulites she outlines have also been experienced in this investigation.

In Chapter 2 and throughout the study it has been stated that literature is an effective sociological barometer because it delineates man's anxieties, hopes, and aspirations. It is logical that man's creations must somehow be related to his world. If one studies man's creative works, one must better know how mankind feels about his world. Sociology of literature advocates continue to argue that literary works can be one of the

most sensitive indicators of contemporary beliefs. For this reason, myself and many other researchers will continue to endorse the value of the study of literary works to aid in social understanding, even though the process involves difficulties. I decided that novels could reveal more about the current social response to women involved in sport than sociological studies on women in sport have been able to do. I feel this has been accomplished, but at great effort.

How to obtain sociological data from literary works is a methodological issue and one of the major difficulties of this study and of Deegan's. Studies in sociology of literature require that one blends the disciplines of sociology and of literature. While the theory of inter-disciplinary research is currently a respected scholarly approach, it is in reality an exceedingly difficult task. The current emphasis on empirical research in sociology and the critical narrative style of literary investigations should be complementary aspects that would only serve to strengthen any inter-disciplinary study. However, this is not the case. Proponents of each discipline exacerbate the problems of the fledgling researcher wishing to try new research methods, by advocating an exact replication of the procedures that are familiar to their discipline. If their suggested course is not followed, usually they become critical of the quality of the work, the resultant being

that valuable hours of research time are spent attempting to mediate between two different academic camps. The compromise is almost always detrimental to the integrity of the study. A noteworthy warning to the future investigator, in sociology of literature: it took twelve years for Deegan's "pioneer venture" to be completed, recognized and published.

The difficulites in establishing good inter-disciplinary relationships are disturbing and disappointing. For combined interests that develop new methods and techniques for investigating recurrent issues could only be beneficial. Advantages could be accrued in two ways: there would be a check on the integrity and validity of research findings from the parent disciplines and new data indiscernible by traditional methods could be available.

This study has demonstrated both advantages. The two levels of analysis used brought to light two different kinds of insights. Demographic data collected in sociological studies on women in sport was found replicated in fiction. Sociological findings were supported in literary narratives and descriptions; the validity of research findings from the parent discipline of sociology has had a positive review.

New data was uncovered on the second level of investigation. Clues and hints to data sociological attitude inventories had difficulty getting definitive

information about began to emerge as literary evidence for attitude climate was extracted from the novels. Contemporary literature, in general, offered primarily negative or stereotypic character compositions for the female athlete.

One can speculate about the meaning of this trend. Since the first hearing, mankind has used tales as a method to teach social mores. Aesop's fable of the tortoise and the hare still works to convince us slow and steady has merit. Are contemporary authors expressing social beliefs? If so, the implicit message seems to be that an avid devotion to athletic activities is still not accepted by our society as appropriate behavior for females.

Female athletes and homosexuality, does one condition nurture the other? Successful female athletes and failure to succeed in satisfying male relationships, are they inter-related variables? There is no sociological evidence to help clarify these questions, but literary works are implying that the components are inter-related. Surely in areas of such great interest and controversy creative ways to gain insight should be encouraged. Sociology of literature is a new area of research and if accepted and used can reinforce the findings of traditional social research and aid in providing new insights.

Speculations

To describe a phenomenon is relatively easy, to attempt to evaluate its effects is far more difficult and somewhat beyond the scope of this study. It has been argued, extensively in Chapter 2, that literature may have the power to influence, to shape, society and individuals. But what possible import could this have when a quick survey reveals most of the literature with adult female athletes falls into the category of "soft porn." These novels were undoubtedly written to sell and probably written for a male audience. Whether women read them or not, it is possible that attitudes are being reinforced. Are these images ones that should be reinforced? No one would suggest an agency is necessary to regulate literary characterizations, nor would that be desirable. However, some awareness of the power of literature and some assessment of what is being presented is essential. Most people would agree that the literature of a time is both a product of that society and an influence on the society. Just what kind of influence and how powerful the influence is, needs much more study.

To attempt an explanation of a phenomenon is also difficult. Why is the characterization of the female athlete so prescribed? Why do adult females, in novels, suffer through perverse afflictions? Why do juvenile females, in fiction, have happy endings? Willis offers

a viable theory that can be interpreted to explain some of these questions.[11]

Willis' opening remarks are vital to this study's objectives and in support of the rationale for using other methods to gain social insight. Willis states, that when we try to understand society and cultural meaning, we are dealing with symbolic systems, social values, and social attitudes which cannot be quantified. Any event or occurrence in a society exists in a reciprocal and dialectical relation with society. It is impossible to separate society and the phenomenon or to view them as a one-way, cause and effect situation.[12] Willis' other important contribution is to ask not why the phenomenon exists; but why is it important or unimportant to our society?

Men's sporting role is deemed important, while women's role in sport is not seen as important. Why? Willis believes that central cultural attitudes and norms are distilled to their most elemental and coherent forms in sport.[13] Women, in our society, do not have the status that men do, and sex role differentiation that supports this subordination is important and must be learned. When females do not accept usual role ascriptions, they threaten existing structures. Social controls are then imposed on them, such as, humorous treatment, reminders of their sexual identity, and, in literature, perverse occurrences. This theory can be

extrapolated to explain the different fictional treatment assigned juvenile female athletes compared to adult female athletes. Acquiescent acceptance by society would be characteristic of a learning stage. Passive acceptance of a young female's physical activity would be allowed, if it was thought to be a temporary phase, one a young girl might soon learn to change or grow out of. Willis' theory can also help to explain why female fictional athletes receive less favorable treatment than do male fictional athletes.

Willis continues with an economic explanation for the importance of sex role learning and sex role differentiation. He states it is an economic necessity to have sex role assignments, for men must learn to be producers and women must learn to be consumers so that our capitalistic organization can continue.[14] Whether the assignment of preset sex roles is for economic, emotional, sociological or psychological reasons is not as important to this study as recognizing that the assignment of sex roles is a social ideology.

Ideologies are of paramount importance to the functioning of a society. They are the rationalization and legitimation of social organization. They are what is deemed "necessary" for that society's existence. It is extremely difficult to vary or change social ideologies for they are the foundation of social existence.[15]

Female sex role subordination is, for whatever reasons, a cultural ideology.

Sex role differentiation and ranking are a part of our cultural ideology and as such are a part of the functions and expectations of the sporting world. Sport is still part of the male's role assignment.

> The fact of the matter is that, in America, a female's athletic competence is seen to detract from her womanliness (e.g., "she's the best athlete in the family--she can throw a ball, bat, and run like a boy"). For this reason, many females never attempt to become involved directly in the most popular sports open to women (track, swimming, ice skating, tennis, etc.) and often cease participation before their prime. Most are forced by cultural definitions to choose between being an athlete (thereby facing barely hidden suspicions as to the degree of their heterosexuality) and their womanhood. Because female role responsibilities traditionally have not been of an instrumental character, females are not perceived to be legitimate recipients of sports' claimed benefits. Thus, few people in America take seriously the female who wants to become a jockey, or a professional football referee, or a baseball participant, or a major league baseball umpire or a marathoner--although she is quite acceptable as a cheerleader or pom-pom girl.[16]

It is conceivable that society could even interpret a woman's athletic achievement in a symbolic way, as an invasion of a male's role and as an attempt to obtain a male's higher ranking. This gives credence to an author's repeated attempts to "correct" things by giving precedence in novels to the female athlete's sexual identity. For a woman's encroachment in a male's role is a threat to

basic social ideologies, a threat to the social system. Our society, our sporting world and our literary world still treat this affront to social functioning with unequal treatment.

Value changes in ideologies are difficult, if not impossible to bring about in our institutions. Edwards discusses this point in his article, "Sport and Social Change."[17] He predicts that very little adjustment can be made in the structure and function of sport. Edwards states that sport is a receptor and reflector of what is essential and important to our culture. When values begin to change, sport or value receptive institutions are slow to change, for they were developed to help bring about stability and continuity. For a change to occur a vast majority of society must accept the new values and attempt to institutionalize them.

> In fact, without some massive change in the value prescriptions of American society as a whole--and not merely among some significant segments thereof--the institution of sport cannot alter its structure and function and survive.[18]

Women are becoming increasingly involved in athletic activities and sport experiences; however, there appears to be a lag in our institutions' (i.e., sport and literature) abilities to adjust and reshape their structures and functions to meet these changes. The female athlete is a reality in our world, but our non-adapting

ideologies and institutions still assign her role options and negative sanctions that are usually reserved for anomalous or irregular behavior.

The woman in sport operates and tries to function under two severely constraining factors: an ideology (sex role subordination) and an institution (the sports world) which generally are in opposition to her activities. Both are extremely difficult to change for the former is the justification of a way of existence and the latter is an expression of that way of existence.

What will happen? Social scientists suggest that inflexible institutions are usually changed by slow internal adaption or revolutionary revamping. Both proceed with either major support or a minority in a manipulative position. Female athletes are in neither of these categories. The role and function of women in society is still a matter for critical debate. The outcome, the confrontation, if there will be one, is uncertain.

Yet our existing ideologies and institutions do not help to promote fulfillment in women or total development of their potential. An ideology based on limiting one sex to supportive or subservient roles and institutions that reflect these ideas is equally debilitating to both males and females. Is it possible our ideologies and our institutions can change? The changing images in juvenile literature appear to be one small index of possible,

positive adaptations. Maybe more fictional female characters will be saying, as Willa did, "Me, I did it!"

To suppose that if a more positive and varied characterization of female athletes came about, it would cause an increase in female athletic participation, is too simplistic. This would assume literature and reality had a one-way cause and effect relationship. Social change is often slow. It is a process whose components are generally multi-faceted, with reciprocal and dialectical relationships between and within each influence and each component.

Common sense assures us, however, that the literature of a society and the institutions of a society must have some correlation. The relationship of mankind and his institutions has been discussed throughout history. One does not usually assume rationality as an innate human trait. The ordering of our ideas, what we perceive as logical and right is part of our training, a reflection of our institutions.[19] Literature is one of our institutions. "Fiction not only legitimizes emotions and aspirations, it also . . . gives models and patterns of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour."[20]

Change is occurring and literature could help to promote it. Edwards' quote, "that no one takes seriously the female who wants to be a jockey, a football referee, a basketball participant, or a marathoner," is no longer completely true. Looking at only one of these options,

the number of female marathon runners is increasing steadily. With every edition of Runner's World the number of females competing in marathons rises. These women are being taken seriously; in newspapers, in magazines, and on television. Surely the flattering and admiring coverage awarded these women has influenced others. Fictional athletic roles for women, if positively presented, might also serve as "imagination stretchers," as possible patterns to aspire to, or as models one might want to emulate.

I would like to believe that the relationship between sport, literature and reality might become a multiplicative one. That is, when more females enter into sport activities it would be a catalyst that would stimulate the creation of more accurate portrayals of female athletes in fiction. Further, that complimentary portrayals of athletic women in fiction would influence more women to attempt physical challenges in sport competitions or recreational activities.

These are only optimistic speculations. Who can know whether the ponderous institutions of sport and literature can help bring about change by reflecting beginning variations in ideology. For those of us committed to the values of physical activity it would be a pleasure were these speculations to become a reality. If sport and literature could present a broader, brighter spectrum of norms and values, so that women would be

included and welcomed, perhaps then the joy and satisfaction of physical movement, physical challenge, and physical achievement would be and could be experienced by a larger number of women.

Chapter 10 Endnotes

[1] Isobel McKenna, "Women in Canadian Literature," Canadian Literature, No. 62 (1974), p. 69.

[2] Rosalind Miles, The Fiction of Sex Themes and Functions of Sex Difference in the Modern Novel (London: Vision Press, 1974), p. 13.

[3] Christian K. Messenger, "Sport in American Literature," Diss. Northwestern Univ. 1974; and Michael Vincent Oriard, "Dreaming of Heroes: American Sports Fiction from the Beginning to the Present," Diss. Stanford Univ. 1976.

[4] Oriard, p. 6.

[5] Robert Higgs, "The Unheroic Hero: A Study of the Athlete in Twentieth Century American Literature," Diss. Univ. Tennessee 1967, p. 7.

[6] N. Berman, "Play, Sport, and Survival in Contemporary American Fiction," Diss. Ohio State Univ. 1975, p. 2.

[7] Wilely Lee Umphlett, "The Essential Encounter: The Myth of the Sporting Hero in American Fiction," Diss. Florida State Univ. 1967, p. 2.

[8] Leslie Fielder, The Art of the Essay (New York: Thomas Crowell, 1958), p. 259.

[9] Oriard, p. 278.

[10] Dorothy Yost Deegan, The Stereotype of the Single Woman in American Novels (New York: Octagon Books, 1969), foreword.

[11] Paul Willis, "Women in Sport [2]," Working Papers in Cultural Studies, 5 (Spring 1974), 21-35.

[12] Willis, p. 22.

[13] Willis, p. 23.

[14] Willis, p. 30.

[15] Willis, pp. 28-29.

[16] Harry Edwards, Sociology of Sport (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey Press, 1973), p. 232.

[17] Harry Edwards, "Sport and Social Change," in Sport Sociology: Contemporary Themes, ed. Andrew Yiannakis, Thomas D. McIntyre, Merril J. Melnick, and Dale P. Hart (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt, 1976), pp. 218-22.

[18] Edwards, "Sport and Social Change," p. 219.

[19] Joan Rockwell, Fact in Fiction (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), p. 3.

[20] Rockwell, p. 81.

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[1]Key: (J) juvenile fiction--no female athlete
(JA) juvenile fiction with female athlete
(A) adult fiction--no female athlete
(AA) adult fiction with female athlete
(N) not located
(O) other than novel.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

CURRENT STUDIES IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF LITERATURE

CURRENT STUDIES IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF LITERATURE

Studies	Literature	Conclusions
Albrecht, Milton "Does Literature Reflect Common Values?"	magazines	current attitudes about the family reflected
Auchinger, Peter The American Soldier in Fiction	novels	current attitudes about soldiering reflected
Barnett, James Divorce and the American Divorce Novel	novels	current attitudes about divorce reflected
Berelson, Bernard, and Salter, Pat "Majority and Minority Americans"	magazines	prejudicial beliefs about races reflected
Black, Fay The Strike in the American Novel	novels	current attitudes about strikes reflected
Broderick, Dorothy Image of the Black in Children's Fiction	juvenile fiction	stereotypes about blacks reflected
deCharms, Richard, and Moellen, Rich Values Expressed in American Children's Readers	textbooks	does reflect beliefs on the values of achievement and success reflected
Deegan, Dorothy Stereotype of the Single Woman in the American Novel	novels	stereotypes of single women reflected

Studies	Literature	Conclusions
Dunham, Vera In Stalin's Time: Middle Class Values in Soviet Fiction	fiction	economic values reflected
Gordon, Michael Juvenile Delinquency in the American Novel	novels	inconclusive
Inglis, Ruth "An Objective Approach to the Relationship Between Fiction and Society"	magazines	did not find any new or progressive ideas, only the current standards reflected
Johns-Heine, Pat, and Gerth, Hans "Values in Mass Periodical Fiction"	magazines	current attitudes reflected
Lyns, John The College Novel in America	novels	current attitudes reflected
McDaniel, Thomas The Administrative Novel	novels	common attitudes toward administrators reflected
Middleton, Russell "Fertility Values in American Magazines"	magazines	current beliefs on family size reflected
Owen, Carol "Feminine Roles and Social Mobility"	magazines	beliefs on the roles for women reflected
Tischler, Nancy Black Masks: Negro Characters in Modern Southern Fiction	novels	stereotypes about blacks reflected

Studies	Literature	Conclusions
Wilson, Susan J. "The Changing Image of Women in Canadian Mass Circulating Magazines, 1930-1970"	magazines	conflicting reflections, inconclusive
Zureik, Elia, and Frizzel, Alan "Values in Canadian Magazine Fiction: A Test of Social Control Theory".	magazines	did not find any new or progressive ideas, only the current standards reflected

APPENDIX B

GENERAL INFORMATION SHEET FOR SUMMARIZING DATA ON PHYSICALLY ACTIVE FICTIONAL FEMALES

GENERAL INFORMATION SHEET FOR SUMMARIZING
DATA ON PHYSICALLY ACTIVE
FICTIONAL FEMALES

1. Title of Book:
2. Author:
3. Author's Sex:
4. Publication Date:
5. Female Athlete's Name:
6. Place in Story:
   a) title, carries her name
   b) major character
   c) minor

Physical Description:

7. Age:
   a) pre-teen (1-12)
   b) teen (13-19)
   c) young adult (20-25)
   d) mature
   x) not known
   y) other than mentioned
8. Race:
   a) Caucasian
   b) Black
   c) Oriental
   d) Hispanic
   x) not known
   y) other than mentioned
9. Personal Status:
   a) single
   b) married, no children
   c) married, children
   d) unmarried, children
   x) not known
   y) other than mentioned

10. General Body Type:
    a) ectomorph
    b) endomorph
    c) mesomorph
    x) not known
    y) other than mentioned
11. General Appearance:
    a) attractive
    b) cute
    c) potential good looks
    d) boyish
    e) ugly
    x) not known
    y) other than mentioned
12. Hair Length:
    a) long
    b) short
    c) medium
    x) not known
    y) other than mentioned
13. Hair Color:
    a) blond
    b) brown
    c) black
    d) red
    x) not known
    y) other than mentioned

Sport Involvement:

14. Type
15. Degree of Involvement:
    a) does activity whenever she can
    b) does activity on set schedule, 3-5 times a week
    c) does activity only when someone else motivates her
    x) not known
    6) other than mentioned

16. Resolution of Physical Activity:
    a) strong commitment to continue
    b) changed type of activity
    c) limited activity
    d) stopped
    x) not known
    y) other than mentioned

Sport Socialization:

17. How was she introduced to activity:
    a) by father
    b) by brother
    c) by mother
    d) by peers
    e) adult male coach
    f) self discover
    g) husband
    x) not known
    y) other than mentioned

18. Why does she continue?
    a) joy in movement
    b) joy in skill mastery
    c) release of tension
    d) health
    e) thrill
    f) outside pressure
    x) not known
    y) other than mentioned

Self Image:

19. What is her general feeling about herself?
    a) generally happy with self
    b) generally unhappy with self
    x) not known
    y) other than mentioned

20. Quality of Human Relationships:
    a) popular
    b) get along well with others
    c) quarrels with most people
    x) not known
    y) other than mentioned

Response from others concerning her activity:

21. Family:
    a) positive-supportive
    b) indifferent
    c) negative
    x) not known
    y) other than mentioned

22. Close friends:
    a) positive-supportive
    b) indifferent
    c) negative
    x) not known
    y) other than mentioned

23. School encounters:
    a) positive-supportive
    b) indifferent
    c) negative
    x) not known
    y) other than mentioned

24. Community:
    a) positive
    b) indifferent
    c) negative
    x) not known
    y) other than mentioned

Synopsis of the story's denouement

APPENDIX C

ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRES

BUCHANAN, BLANKENBAKER, COTTON'S QUESTIONNAIRE

From: Hugh Troy Buchanan, Joe Blankenbaker, and Joyce Cotton, "Academic and Athletic Ability as Popularity Factors in Elementary School Children," Research Quarterly, 47, No. 3 (1976), 322.

1. What would you most like to do at school?

   A. Make good grades.
   B. Be good at sports.
   C. Be popular.

2. A. Name the three boys in your class who make the best grades.
   B. Name the three boys in your class who are the best at sports.
   C. Name the three girls in your class who make the best grades.
   D. Name the three girls in your class who are the best at sports.

3. Name the three most popular boys in your class.

4. Name the three most popular girls in your class.

5. Which of the following would make you popular among your friends? Rank in order.

   A. Make good grades.
   B. Having lots of money.
   C. Being good at sports.
   D. Being handsome or pretty.

MOORE'S QUESTIONNAIRE

From: Beverly Moore, "Attitude of College Women Toward Physical Activity as a Means of Recreation," Research Quarterly, 12 (1941), 720-25.

1. In the time you have for recreation, what type of physical activity do you engage in most frequently?

   A. Social activity (dancing, social games).
   B. Organized team sports (basketball, volleyball, hockey).
   C. Small team or individual sports (tennis, swimming, ice skating).
   D. Any other.

2. How much time a week, on an average, do you spend in physical activity as a part of your recreation? (Include physical education class work if you feel it to be a part of your recreation.)

   A. Five hours or more.
   B. Four hours.
   C. Three hours.
   D. Two hours.
   E. One hour.
   F. None.

3. Do you feel that this is as much time as you would like to spend?

   A. Yes.
   B. No.

   If not, what are your main reasons for not spending more?

   a) Time.
      1) Studies.
      2) Travel.
      3) Work.
      4) Activities.
      5) Other.
   b) Health.
   c) Lack of skill.
   d) Inertia.
   e) No facilities available.
   f) No one with whom to play.
   g) Lack of finances.
   h) Other.

4. At what time in your life did you participate most in physical activity?

   A. College.
   B. Secondary school.
   C. Elementary school.

To what do you attribute this interest?

a) Program, type of life, fewer diversions.
b) Belonged to an organized group.
c) More facilities, or satisfied with less equipment.
d) Other.

5. Do you feel that you have lost any of your actual desire for physical activity since leaving high school?

A. Yes.
B. No.

6. To what extent do you like to participate in sports activities and dancing?

5	4	3	2	1
a great deal	quite a bit	some	a little	not at all

7. To what extent are you deterred from actual participation by the inconvenience of dressing, showering, and getting generally "mussed up"?

5	4	3	2	1
a great deal	quite a bit	some	a little	not at all

8. To what extent does the lack of skill deter you from actual participation?

5	4	3	2	1
a great deal	quite a bit	some	a little	not at all

9. To what extent does lack of time deter you from participation in sports?

5	4	3	2	1
a great deal	quite a bit	some	a little	not at all

10. How important do you consider sports at the present time as part of your recreational program?

5	4	3	2	1
a great deal	quite a bit	some	a little	not at all

WEAR'S QUESTIONNAIRE

From: Carlos L. Wear, "Evaluation of Attitude Toward Physical Education as an Activity Course," Research Quarterly, 22 (1951), 123-26.

Directions--Please Read Carefully: Below you will find some statements about physical education. We would like to know how you feel about each statement. You are asked to consider physical education only from the standpoint of its place as an activity course taught during a regular class period. No reference is intended in any statement to interscholastic or intramural athletics. People differ widely in the way they feel about each statement. There are no right or wrong answers.

You have been provided with a separate answer sheet for recording your reaction to each statement. (a) Read each statement carefully, (b) go to the answer sheet, and (c) opposite the number of the statement place an "x" in the square which is under the word (or words) which best expresses your feeling about the statement. After reading a statement you will know at once, in most cases, whether you agree or disagree with the statement. If you agree, then decide whether to place an "x" under "agree" or "strongly agree." If you disagree, then decide whether to place the "x" under "disagree" or "strongly disagree." In case you are undecided (or neutral) concerning your feeling about the statement, then place an "x" under "undecided." Try to avoid placing an "x" under "undecided" in very many instances.

Wherever possible, let your own personal experience determine your answer. Work rapidly, do not spend much time on any statement. This is not a test, but is simply a survey to determine how people feel about physical education. Your answers will in no way affect your grade in any course. In fact, we are not interested in connecting any person with any paper--so please answer each statement as you actually feel about it. Be sure to answer every statement.

1. If for any reason a few subjects have to be dropped from the school program, physical education should be one of the subjects dropped.
2. Associations in physical education activities give people a better understanding of each other.
3. Physical education activities provide no opportunities for learning to control the emotions.
4. Engaging in vigorous physical activity gets one interested in practicing good health habits.

5. Physical education is one of the more important subjects in helping to establish and maintain desirable social standards.
6. The time spent in getting ready for and engaging in a physical-education class could be more profitably spent in other ways.
7. Vigorous physical activity works off harmful emotional tensions.
8. A person's body usually has all the strength it needs without participation in physical education activities.
9. I would take physical education only if it were required.
10. Participation in physical education activities tends to make one a more socially desirable person.
11. Participation in physical education makes no contribution to the development of poise.
12. Physical education in schools does not receive the emphasis that it should.
13. Because physical skills loom large in importance in youth it is essential that a person be helped to acquire and improve such skills.
14. Physical education classes are poor in opportunities for worthwhile social experiences.
15. Calisthenics taken regularly are good for one's general helath.
16. A person would be better off emotionally if he did not participate in physical education.
17. Skill in active games or sports is not necessary for leading the fullest kind of life.
18. It is possible to make physical education a valuable subject by proper selection of activities.
19. Physical education does more harm physically than it does good.
20. Developing a physical skill brings mental relaxation and relief.
21. Associating with others in some physical education activity is fun.
22. Physical education classes provide nothing which will be of value outside of the class.
23. Physical education classes provide situations for the formation of attitudes which will make one a better citizen.
24. There should not be over two one-hour periods per week devoted to physical education in schools.
25. Physical education situations are among the poorest for making friends.
26. Belonging to a group, for which opportunity is provided in team activities, is a desirable experience for a person.
27. There is not enough value coming from physical education to justify the time consumed.

28. Physical education is an important subject in helping a person gain and maintain all-round good health.
29. Physical education skills make worthwhile contributions to the enrichment of living.
30. No definite beneficial results come from participation in physical education activities.
31. People get all the physical exercise they need in just taking care of their daily work.
32. Engaging in group physical education activities is desirable for proper personality development.
33. All who are physically able will profit from an hour of physical education each day.
34. Physical education activities tend to upset a person emotionally.
35. Physical education makes a valuable contribution toward building up an adequate reserve of strength ane endurance for everyday living.
36. For its contributions to mental and emotional well-being physical education should be included in the program of every school.
37. Physical education tears down sociability by encouraging people to attempt to surpass each other in many of the activities.
38. I would advise anyone who is physically able to take physical education.
39. Participation in physical education activities makes for a more wholesome outlook on life.
40. As far as improving physical health is concerned a physical education is a waste of time.

McGEE'S QUESTIONNAIRE

From: Rosemary McGee, "Comparisons of Attitudes Toward Intensive Competition for High School Girls," Research Quarterly, 27 (1956), 60-73.

We should like to have your personal reaction to each statement as it is presented. Do you agree or disagree with the statement? Even if the girls in your town have never participated in intensive competition what do you think the effects would be? Indicate your own opinion of the statement by making a heavy mark between the dotted lines opposite the item number on the answer sheet. The attitude items are in sections. Be sure to place your answers in the corresponding sections on the answer sheet. The numbers represent the following code:

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral or Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

Use 3 only if you neither agree nor disagree with the statement. If you agree slightly with the item, cross out the 2; if you disagree slightly, cross out the 4.

Your responses to these items are not to be considered as correct or incorrect. We want your personal opinion about them. Remember, check each item as to whether you personally agree or disagree with the item in regard to intensive athletic competition for high school girls.

Items Pertaining to Intensive Athletic Competition for High School Girls

Section A: Place answers to the following items in Section A on the answer sheet.

1. Participation in intensive competition develops leadership.
2. There is a display of excessive emotion during and after girls' participation in intensive competition.
3. Participation in intensive competition trains individuals to face the problems of every day living.
4. The publicity used in intensive competition disturbs a player's sense of values which will have lasting effects for the future.
5. Participation in interscholastic contests develops mental alertness.
6. Tournament basketball develops such intensity of feeling that most girls playing cannot control their own emotional responses.

7. Interscholastic participation promotes a well-balanced outlook on life's values.
8. Since the coach must make the decisions in interscholastic competition, players lose the opportunity to plan their own plays and strategy.
9. Participation in intensive competition assists players to control their emotions.
10. Girls who participate in intensely competitive programs tend to develop masculine mannerisms and attitudes rather than feminine reactions.
11. Participation in intensive competition enhances the ego of shy individuals.
12. Intensely competitive participation creates a sense of achievement in the girl.
13. Intensive competition builds self-respect in the girl who participates.

Section B: Place answers to the following items in Section B on the answer sheet.

1. Girls should have the same opportunity as boys to enjoy the combative struggle of interscholastic basketball.
2. A high school girl who participates in interscholastic athletics specializes in them and so does not learn individual sports which she could play later in life.
3. Intensive competition at the interscholastic level is necessary for real enjoyment of the game.
4. The average American girl wants intensive athletic competition.
5. Participation in intensive competition enables girls to acquire a love for activity.
6. Most high schools do not have enough time or facilities to provide both for interscholastic team sports and recreational individual sports.
7. Intensive competitive participation in high school results in girls leading an active life in later years.
8. Participation in intensive competition does not provide relief from the stress and strain of modern living.
9. Membership on interscholastic teams limits the girl's interest in other school activities.

Section C: Place answers to the following items in Section C on the answer sheet.

1. A season of scheduled contests makes undue physical demands on girls.
2. Most coaches are primarily interested in developing and maintaining the physical welfare of the girls participating.

3. One of the best ways to build strength for the functions of womanhood is to engage in athletic contests.
4. Intense competition in active sports promotes better physical condition while participating.
5. Most girls playing interscholastic basketball games play beyond the stage of moderate fatigue to the point of exhaustion.
6. Intense athletic competition is more suited to the physical make up of high school boys than high school girls.
7. Girls in fit physical condition do not have abnormal emotional reactions.
8. Practice periods as well as games leave most girls on the school team over fatigued.
9. Intense competition in active sports promotes better physical condition in the years following participation.
10. Travel to and from distant games is excessively tiring to the players.
11. Participation during the menstrual period causes fatigue unnoticed until it has exceeded the ordinary limits.

Section D: Place answers to the following items in Section D on the answer sheet.

1. Participating in intensive competition before crowds of excited spectators makes too much emotional strain for most girls.
2. Participation in intensely competitive team events provides a very desirable outlet for a high level of energy.
3. The development of a girls' team is usually done at the cost of slighting the entire physical education program for the majority of girls.
4. Many secondary schools use their girls' athletic teams as a means of advertising.
5. The values received by high school girls from intensive interscholastic competition are insufficient to warrant large expenditures for equipment, travel, etc.
6. Interscholastic competitive games for girls stimulate school spirit more than interclass games.
7. A community derives prestige from the success of its girls' teams in intercity contests.
8. Girls' interscholastic athletic contests are the most effective device for girls to use to create community interest in the school.
9. Newspaper and radio reports on girls' contests increase support of the diversified physical education program for girls.

10. Most coaches find it desirable to do everything possible to get their teams to win.
11. Interscholastic competition gives girls equal opportunity with the boys to receive public recognition.

Section E: Place answers to the following items in Section E on the answer sheet.

1. Travel arrangements used by most teams are completely adequate for the safety and health of the team.
2. Most girls who play tournament ball are taught to maintain standards of practice that will increase their health and protect their safety.
3. Intensive participation presents greater danger of accidents than other phases of daily living.
4. The rules used in tournament games fail to consider the physical capabilities of girls.
5. Most coaches adhere to entirely adequate safety codes for their teams.
6. Adequate protective equipment is worn by the majority of interscholastic participants.
7. Most coaches are qualified to develop health and character as well as skill.
8. Most girls participating in intensive competition lack regular and adequate medical supervision.

Section F: Place answers to the following items in Section F on the answer sheet.

1. Training girls to make quick decisions and responses can be gained more rapidly from the more general physical education program than from the interscholastic type of competition.
2. The participant is usually trained to view athletics primarily in relation to the winning of individual records and team championships.
3. Participation in intensive competition teaches respect for the skilled player whether teammate or opponent.
4. Intensive competition meets the challenge of highly skilled players.
5. Intensive competition for girls places too much importance on trophies and awards.
6. Sufficient skill to satisfy the average individual is developed only through competitive interscholastic participation.

Section G: Place answers to the following items in Section G on the answer sheet.

1. Interscholastic participation develops responses useful in situations of emergency.

2. Participation in intensive competition makes girls less considerate for the rights of others.
3. Competitive athletic participation creates more loyalty to the school than does participation in other school activities.
4. Interscholastic participation teaches girls to win without boasting in public.
5. A girl receives few advantages from identification with an interscholastic team.
6. Membership on athletic teams prevents girls from associating with their normal social crowd.
7. Our society needs less competitive drive in girls and women than in boys and men.
8. Playing on an inter-class team develops more ability to cooperate than playing on a team competing intensively.
9. Participation in intensive competition teaches girls poise when meeting new people.
10. Participants in intensive competition develop respect for officials.
11. Emphasis on winning in intensive competition causes most players to forget the rights of their opponents.
12. Participation in competitive contests helps the participant adjust to others of her own age.

APPENDIX D

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION ON FICTIONAL JUVENILE FEMALE ATHLÈTES

EXPLANATION

There were problems in gleaning data from fictional works for the information sheets. Unlike an individual being interviewed, fictional characters can not be asked questions. Some interpretation of the information must be done. These kinds of questions had to be dealt with.

Zan appears in three books, in three different sports. Is she a basketball player, a track star, or a baseball player? Was Gidget a surfer or a skier? Should characters who star in different sports roles in different books be tabulated in every sport category? This was done, in this study.

Categories were often too limited to allow the recording of important pieces of information. How should a parent who started out non-supportive of a girl's activity and then became very supportive be marked? How should a girl who began the story with little self appreciation, but who matured and learned self confidence be entered? In this study, the reader attempted to assess what the author's concluding intent might be and categorized the information accordingly. For example, Isabelle was often unhappy with herself, but the story began to trace a progression of how she learned to be a happier person. She was entered as a person happy with herself, for that was her final state.

There was also no way of giving weight to the importance of different characterizations. If a book and its characters have the power to influence, it would seem five different girls in five different books, pictured as tennis players, may have more impact than five female basketball players contained in one book.

It seemed that this type of factual "net" let important and essential information slip away. Actual descriptive passages by the author, role assignments for the character, and action options assigned to the character revealed a lot more. Possibly, in future studies, individual case histories should be separately developed for each character discovered, rather than an information tally sheet.

The tallies represented in Appendix D came from thirty-four fictional characters involved in the following sport activities:

Baseball

1. Sharon, major character in Not Bad for a Girl
2. Mrs. Vassey, major character in The Year Mom Won the Pennant
3. Zan, major character in Zan Boomer
4. Jean, major character in Single to Center

Basketball

5. Delilah, major character in Delilah
6. Rusty, major character in Freckled and Fourteen

Basketball (continued)

7. Zan, major character in Zanballer

8. Narrator, major character in An American Girl

Baton Twirling

9. Sharon, major character in Fancy Strut

Dance

10. Emily, major character in Hold Fast to Your Dreams

Diving

11. Stacy, minor character in The Electronic Olympics

Field Hockey

12. Nan Pratt, minor character in The Hockey Girls

13. Dodie Fenwick, minor character in The Hockey Girls

14. Iram, major character in The Hockey Girls

Fitness

15. Dede, major character in Between Friends

Football

16. Faith, minor character in Mystery Player at Left End

Horseback Riding

17. Janet, major character in Janet Must Ride

18. Judy, major character in Afraid to Ride

19. Joanna, major character in Mother Wants a Horse

20. Ruth, major character in The Team

Sailing

21. Narrator, major character in Long Walk Down a Short Dock

Skiing

22. Gidget, major character in Cher Papa

Soccer

23. Heather, minor character in Shrimp's Soccer Goal

24. Miss Taylor, minor character in Shrimp's Soccer Goal

Surfer

25. Gidget, major character in Gidget

Swimmer

26. Jill, major character in Between Friends

Tennis

27. Sally, major character in Champions Don't Cry

28. Vicky, major character in The Tennis Machine

29. Older Sister, minor character in Tennis Shoes

30. Younger Sister, major character in Tennis Shoes

31. Marjory, minor character in Champions Don't Cry

32. Nell Stanley, minor character in The Tennis Machine

Track

33. Zan, major character in Zanbanger

34. Isabelle, major character in Isabelle, the Itch

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION ON FICTIONAL JUVENILE FEMALE ATHLETES

	Tally
6. Place in Story:	
a) title, carries her name	6
b) major character	17
c) minor character	11
Physical Description:	
7. Age:	
a) pre-teen (1-12)	12
b) teen (13-19)	20
c) young adult (20-25)	2
d) mature	
x) not known	
y) other than mentioned	
8. Race:	
a) Caucasian	33
b) Black	1
c) Oriental	
d) Hispanic	
x) not known	
y) other than mentioned	
9. Personal Status:	
a) single	33
b) married, no children	
c) married, children	1
d) unmarried, children	
x) not known	
6) other than mentioned	
10. General Body Type:	
a) ectomorph	13
b) endomorph	3
c) mesomorph	5
x) not known	13
y) other than mentioned	

	Tally
11. General Appearance:	
a) attractive	9
b) cute	12
c) potential good looks	3
d) boyish	2
e) ugly	2
x) not known	6
y) other than mentioned	
12. Hair Length:	
a) long	12
b) short	9
c) medium	4
x) not known	9
y) other than mentioned	
13. Hair Color:	
a) blond	11
b) brown	5
c) black	1
d) red	
x) not known	13
y) other than mentioned	4
Sport Involvement:	
14. Type of Sport Played:	
ballet	1
baseball	4
basketball	4
baton twirling	1
diving	1
field hockey	3
fitness	1
football	1
horseback riding	4
sailing	4
skiing	1

	Tally
soccer	2
surfing	1
swimming	1
tennis	6
track	2
15. Degree of Involvement:	
a) does activity whenever she can	16
b) does activity on set schedule, 3-5 times a week	12
c) does activity only when someone else motivates her	1
x) not known	2
y) other than mentioned	3
16. Resolution of Physical Activity:	
a) strong commitment to continue	18
b) changed types of activity	2
c) limited activity	2
d) stopped	3
x) not known	7
y) other than mentioned	2
Sport Socialization:	
17. How was she introduced to activity:	
a) by father	6
b) by brother	1
c) by mother	3
d) by peers	2
e) adult male coach	4
f) self discover	3
g) husband	
x) not known	8
y) other than mentioned	7
18. Why does she continue?	
a) joy in movement	3
b) joy in skill mastery	18

	Tally
c) release of tension	1
d) health	
e) thrill	
f) outside pressure	1
x) not known	9
y) other than mentioned	2
Self Image:	
19. What is her general feeling about herself?	
a) generally happy with self	21
b) generally unhappy with self	3
x) not known	8
y) other than mentioned	2
20. Quality of Human Relationships:	
a) popular	17
b) get along well with others	6
c) quarrels with most people	2
x) not known	6
y) other than mentioned	3
Response from others concerning her activity:	
21. Family:	
a) positive-supportive	22
b) indifferent	3
c) negative	1
x) not known	8
y) other than mentioned	1
22. Close friends:	
a) positive-supportive	24
b) indifferent	1
c) negative	
x) not known	9
y) other than mentioned	
23. School encounters:	
a) positive-supportive	13
b) indifferent	

	Tally
c) negative	2
x) not known	19
y) other than mentioned	
24. Community:	
a) positive	14
b) indifferent	
c) negative	1
x) not known	19
y) other than mentioned	

Synopsis of the story's denouement

Sport involvement ends with positive rewards

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APPENDIX E

"WHO COACHED WHOM"

"WHO COACHED WHOM"

Fictional Juvenile Athlete Coached by:

Male	Female
1. female horseback rider in C. W. Anderson, Afraid to Ride	1. female dancer in Catherine Blanton, Hold Fast to Your Dreams
2. female rider in Enid Bagnold, National Velvet	2. male ballplayers in Matthew Christopher, The Year Mom Won the Pennant
3. female ballerina in Vicki Baum, Ballerina	3. female hockey players in Scott Corbett, The Hockey Girls
4. female ballplayer in Bill Carol, Single to Center	4. basketball girls in Charles Drummond, Death and the Leaping Ladies
5. female karate practitioner in Harry Crews, Karate Is a Thing of the Spirit	5. male soccer player in Beman Lord, Shrimp's Soccer Goal
6. female tennis player in Nan Gilbert, Champions Don't Cry	6. female rider in K. M. Peyton, The Team
7. female runner in Brian Glanville, The Olympian	
8. female motorcyclist in James Hall, Racers to the Sun	
9. female skier in Oakley Hall, The Pleasure Garden	

Male	Female
10. female basketball player in Carole Hart, Delilah	
11. female football player in Ralph Hopton & Anne Balliol, Pink Pants	
12. tennis player in Helen Hull Jacobs, Center Court	
13. tennis player in Helen Hull Jacobs, Tennis Ace	
14. tennis player in Helen Hull Jacobs, Laurel for Judy	
15. tennis player in Helen Hull Jacobs, The Tennis Machine	
16. female basketball player in R. Rozanne Knudson, Zanballer	
17. female surfer in Frederick Kohner, Gidget	
18. female track runner in Peter Lear, Golden Girl	
19. female tennis player in Lawrence Meynell, Double Fault	
20. female rider in Diana Pullein-Thompson, Janet Must Ride	

Male	Female
21. female sailor in Pat Richoux, Long Walk on a Short Dock	
22. female ballplayer in Paul Rothweiler, The Sensuous Southpaw	
23. female tennis player in Noel Streatfeild, Tennis Shoes	
24. female ballplayer in Isabella Taves, Not Bad for a Girl	
25. female mountain climber in Trevanian, The Eiger Sanction	
26. female tennis player in Douglass Wallop, Mixed Singles	
27. female runner in Patricia Nell Warren, The Front Runner	

APPENDIX F

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION ON FICTIONAL ADULT FEMALE ATHLETES

EXPLANATION

The tallies represented in Appendix F come from these thirty-three fictional characters, participating in the following physical activities:

Ballet Dancing

1. Katja, major character in Theme for Ballet

Baseball

2. Jeri, major character in Sensuous Southpaw

Basketball

3. Willa, major character in Big Man

4-9. Miss Winkelbaum, Tanya, Irene, Ethel, Juana, and Em in Death and the Leaping Ladies

Bull Fighting

10. Esmeralda, major character in Toro! Toro! Toro!

Deep Sea Fishing

11. Zoe Mason, minor character in Stay Hungry

Field Hockey

12. Joan Gilling, minor character in Bell Jar

Karate

13. Gaye Nell Odell, major character in Karate Is a Thing of the Spirit

Motorcycling

14. Gunner, major character in Racers to the Sun

Mountain Climbing

15. George Hotfort, minor character in Eiger Sanction

16. Kate, major character in Wolf Mountain

17. Varya, major character in The Ascent of D13

Skating

18. Barbara, major character in Cocoa Blades

Skiing

19. Rody Bliss, major character in Pleasure Garden

20. Betsy, minor character in Pleasure Garden

Teaching Physical Education

21-23. Mary Innes, Beau Nash, Barbara Rouse in Miss Pym Disposes

Tennis

24. Jojo Barton, minor character in Miss Bannister's Girls

25. Evelyn Barker, minor character in Double Fault

26. Dallas, minor character in World Class

27. Frances Bigelow, major character in Mixed Singles

28. Lily, major character in Mixed Singles

29. Barbara Headly, major character in Grand Slam

Track

30. Goldine, major character in Golden Girl

31. Jill, major character in The Olympian

32. Betsy Heden, minor character in Front Runner

Water Skiing

33. Mary Tate Farnsworth, major character in Stay Hungry

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION ON FICTIONAL
ADULT FEMALE ATHLETES

	Tally
6. Place in Story:	
a) title, carries her name	2
b) major character	14
c) minor character	17
Physical Description:	
7. Age:	
a) pre-teen (1-12)	
b) teen (13-19)	9
c) young adult (20-25)	18
d) mature	5
x) not known	1
y) other than mentioned	
8. Race:	
a) Caucasian	27
b) Black	3
c) Oriental	
d) Hispanic	1
x) not known	1
y) other than mentioned	1
9. Personal Status:	
a) single	25
b) married, no children	
c) married, children	4
d) unmarried, children	1
x) not known	1
y) other than mentioned	2
10. General Body Type:	
a) ectomorph	17
b) endomorph	4
c) mesomorph	2
x) not known	10
y) other than mentioned	

	Tally
11. General Appearance:	
a) attractive	19
b) cute	5
c) potential good looks	1
d) boyish	1
e) ugly	3
x) not known	4
y) other than mentioned	
12. Hair Length:	
a) long	16
b) short	2
c) medium	1
x) not known	14
y) other than mentioned	
13. Hair Color:	
a) blond	10
b) brown	3
c) black	6
d) red	
x) not known	14
y) other than mentioned	
Sport Involvement:	
14. Type of Sport Played:	
ballet dancing	1
baseball	1
basketball	7
bull fighting	1
deep sea fishing	1
field hockey	1
karate	1
motorcycling	1
mountain climbing	3
skating	1
skiing	1

	Tally
teaching physical education	4
tennis	5
track	3
water skiing	1
15. Degree of Involvement:	
a) does activity whenever she can	22
b) does activity on set schedule, 3-5 times a week	8
c) does activity only when someone else motivates her	1
x) not known	2
y) other than mentioned	
16. Resolution of Physical Activity:	
a) strong commitment to continue	16
b) changed types of activity	
c) limited activity	
d) stopped	9
x) not known	8
y) other than mentioned	
Sport Socialization:	
17. How was she introduced to activity:	
a) by father	5
b) by brother	
c) by mother	
d) by peers	1
e) adult male coach	3
f) self discover	5
x) not known	18
y) other than mentioned	1
18. Why does she continue?	
a) joy in movement	2
b) joy in skill mastery	13
c) release of tension	
d) health	
e) thrill	2

	Tally
f) outside pressure	
x) not known	15
y) other than mentioned	1
Self Image:	
19. What is her general feeling about herself:	
a) generally happy with self	17
b) generally unhappy with self	9
x) not known	7
y) other than mentioned	
20. Quality of Human Relationships:	
a) popular	5
b) get along well with others	15
c) quarrels with most people	3
x) not known	5
y) other than mentioned	5
21. Family:	
a) positive-supportive	11
b) indifferent	2
c) negative	2
x) not known	18
y) other than mentioned	
22. Close friends:	
a) positive-supportive	13
b) indifferent	1
c) negative	2
x) not known	15
y) other than mentioned	2
23. School encounters:	
a) positive-supportive	15
b) indifferent	
c) negative	
x) not known	17
y) other than mentioned	1

	Tally
24. Community:	
a) positive	11
b) indifferent	2
c) negative	1
x) not known	18
y) other than mentioned	1

Synopsis of the story's denouement

APPENDIX G

"WHO GETS WHAT AND WHO GETS WHOM"

"WHO GETS WHAT AND WHO GETS WHOM"

	Gets Man	Loses Man
Gives Up Sport	1. Lily, in Mixed Singles 2. Katja, in Theme for Ballet 3. Gaye Nell, in Karate Is a Thing of the Spirit 4. Esmeralda, in Toro! Toro! Toro! 5. Barbara, in Cocoa Blades 6. Mary Tate, in Stay Hungry	1. Jill, in The Olympian 2. Betsy, in The Front Runner
Stays With Sport	1. Varya, in The Ascent of D13 2. Barbara, in Grand Slam	1. Willa, in Big Man 2. Gunner, in Racers to the Sun 3. Frances, in Mixed Singles 4. Rody, in The Pleasure Garden 5. Dallas, in World Class